

THE GREYCLIFF GIRLS in CAMP



HARRIET PYNE GROVE





Slipping her hand down further, she fished out a queer-looking-metal case of some sort.

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(*The Greycliff Girls in Camp*)

THE GREYCLIFF GIRLS IN CAMP

BY HARRIET PYNE GROVE

AUTHOR OF

"Cathalina at Greycliff," "The Girls of Greycliff,"
"Greycliff Heroines," "Greycliff Wings."



A. L. BURT COMPANY

Publishers

New York

PL 7
G925
Grove

THE GREYCLIFF GIRLS SERIES

A Series of Stories for Girls
By **HARRIET PYNE GROVE**

**CATHALINA AT GREYCLIFF
THE GIRLS OF GREYCLIFF
THE GREYCLIFF GIRLS IN CAMP
GREYCLIFF HEROINES
GREYCLIFF WINGS**

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THE GREYCLIFF GIRLS IN CAMP

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JUL -9 '23

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TO MERRYMEETING GIRLS

With warmest gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Webster, to whom Merrymeeting Camp owes existence, and to Miss Cotteral, the other councillors, and the girls, for the interest and inspiration which they supplied.

The characters are all fictitious. The setting and activities, with some incidents, are taken from the camp life.

To my daughter, who wrote the Squirrels' Inn entertainment described in chapter twenty-three, credit is due for those verses. The words of Camping Days were written by Marion Buerger of Cincinnati.

THE GREYCLIFF GIRLS IN CAMP

CHAPTER I.

THE TRIP TO CAMP.

THE Greycliff girls who had decided to go to the girls' camp in Maine with Patricia West, their English teacher, were busy getting ready their camp equipment in the short time which elapsed between the close of school and their departure for camp. School had closed early in June and Merrymeeting Camp did not open until July 5th, but Miss West, who had been a councillor at camp for several seasons, was to have charge of a delightful and instructive trip that was offered by the camp authorities to any of the older girls who wanted to take it. This would give them the opportunity to see Niagara, Toronto, Lake Ontario, the St. Lawrence and Thousand Islands, Montreal, and the White Mountains. The trip was so planned that the girls would

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see the best part of the scenery by day, and would have rest at hotels from the necessary sleeping car and boat travel. All reservations were made on boat and train and at hotels, and in the case of the girls leaving with the Cincinnati parties, even baggage was called for at the homes and the tickets purchased.

Letters went back and forth. Hilary Lancaster was now living in Cincinnati, which was also Miss West's home. Helen Paget and Evelyn Calvert, two Southern girls who had been at Greycliff, were to join Hilary, visiting her a day or two and starting with her party. Cathalina Van Buskirk and Lilian North were to join them at Buffalo; Betty Barnes, at Toronto, where she was visiting her aunt.

"The whole 'quartet' of our suite will be together on this trip," wrote Lilian to Hilary, "and more of our special friends at camp,—won't it be jolly? I've never seen Niagara, nor ever been out of the United States. I wrote to Eloise and urged her to come, but she says that she can not possibly get ready so soon and will have to meet us at camp if she gets there at all!"

It was the last Thursday in June, and the train to Buffalo was to leave at 6:05 P. M. Cincinnati was steaming with heat during one of those days which the beautiful Queen City can serve to its inhabitants in summer. Perspiration shone on faces

and trickled down backs. The Central Union Station was like an oven, but cheerful, happy faces and lively conversation, anticipatory of interesting experiences, brightened the farewells.

Both Dr. and Mrs. Lancaster, with Mary, Gordon and Tommy, were there to see Hilary and June off; for June, to her great delight, was going too. Dr. Lancaster had packed the whole family, with their guests, Helen and Evelyn, into his car, recently presented to him by his congregation, and brought them from the parsonage to the station. Already Miss West was there, with three first-year high-school girls, Jean Marshall, Marjorie White and Rhoda Jenkins, known later at camp as "Jenkie" or "Jenks".

"Think of the cool breezes in Maine," said Dr. Lancaster, as he delivered several small suit-cases to their owners and took out a big white handkerchief, "to catch his tears", as Tommy said.

"Tommy and I are going to our aunt's for a visit," said Gordon to Miss West, for he wanted it to be known that he was not entirely left out of good times. "And Father says that p'raps we can go to Boothbay Camp next summer. The oldest got to go first in our family!"

Time sped on as they chatted, till presently the iron gates opened and with Miss West and the tickets in the lead, the girls passed through. A few

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friends were permitted to accompany them and escort them to the train.

"Don't forget your pocket-book, Jean," admonished one auntie, through the open window.

"Yes, do hang on to that, or let Miss West carry your money," added another.

"I've been known to leave my pocket-book," explained Jean aside to Hilary. "Please take this twenty-five, Miss West."

"Be sure to write a card in Buffalo, Hilary," said Dr. Lancaster.

"O, yes, Father, we'll write a post-card from every single place," replied June, happily excited over the trip, "alone, with only Hilary!"

It was some time before the train started, and how they longed to get away from the hot station! The electric fans started and gave some relief. Bags or suit-cases were arranged, hats and umbrellas disposed of, while Miss West counted noses and saw that each girl was in her own section or knew where it was.

"Let me see. Hilary, you and June are in number nine, right over Helen and Evelyn. Too bad you have to double in an upper. Won't you take my berth?"

"No, indeed; thank you, Miss West. It was our fault that we did not decide about June's going till the last minute. I'm thankful that we could get the other reservations."

"We are nicely fixed, close together and in the center of the car. Don't forget your numbers."

One of the girls had never slept in a Pullman before and longed to ask many questions; but ashamed to appear ignorant before the others, she foolishly would have waited to find out herself as best she could, had not June, who was not in the least ashamed of not having traveled at night, asked Hilary the very questions which gave the necessary information.

At last the train started. The electric lights, which had added so much to the heat, were turned off. "O, goody, we're moving!" exclaimed June, settling comfortably back by Hilary, who had put June next to the window and was fanning them both. "Goodbye, dear old Cincy, we're going to see lots of rivers and lakes and boats and things before we get back to the Ohio and the Island Queen or the Morning Star."

Candy boxes came out immediately and were passed around, but to Miss West's surprise and relief, the girls tasted sparingly.

"No, thanks," said Marjorie, as Jean offered her a box of chocolates, "I promised Mother not to touch candy till the trip was at least almost over. She wanted me to get there all right. And any way this is my summer to reduce. I have to take a dip every morning, get to breakfast on time, go on the

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hikes and everything. And here old Jean eats twice as much as I do, and see how nice and slim she is."

"It's in our family to be skinny," remarked Jean. "I like what you say about my eating twice as much as you do," she continued, grinning at Marjorie. "No, thank you; I had two caramels and a bonbon. See? I brought along an *Atlantic Monthly* to show how high-brow I am. Auntie bought it for me, though."

Different magazines were produced and the girls settled down quietly to read, chat, or watch the passing scenery. As night drew on, cooler air came in the screened windows. The girls, tired with the heat and the activities incident to their departure, were glad to get to their berths as soon as the porter made them up.

"How do we ever get up there, Hilary?" asked June.

"O, the porter will bring a little ladder and will help us up; and in the morning we'll press a little button to ring for him and he'll help us down again."

The tips of brown or black oxfords peeped from beneath the green curtains behind which quiet, well-behaved girls were quickly preparing for the night. "Here's the hanger for our coats, Helen," whispered Evelyn. "Maybe we can get our dresses on it too."

"Let's use that for our dresses, they're longer. I'll get a hanger out of my suit-case for the coats,

or we can fold them and put them on the shelf. See these hooks? You just pull them out straight. We certainly shall never need that blanket!"

"No telling, when we get up near the lake. Why do they always have the pillow on the end toward the engine?"

"I don't know. I'm going to double mine up so I won't break my neck if the train bumps when it starts or stops."

"Mother said if we wanted to sleep on our valuables not to tuck them under our pillows where any thief could get them by slipping in a hand, but to put them inside a pillow case and turn the open end of that toward the inside."

"I'd go off and leave them in the morning! The only safety for me is to have them pinned to me, I guess."

"All right, girls?"—in Miss West's quiet voice, as she paused by the various curtains. Soft replies assured her that everybody was comfortable and soon quiet reigned in the car, except when the porter passed through with some late arrival from one of the towns at which the train stopped.

"I can't go to sleep, Hilary," whispered June about midnight.

"Are you comfy?"

"O, yes!"

"Well, don't worry; nobody will sleep much, I

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suspect, this first night. We'll be at a hotel tomorrow night. Maybe we can rest and doze a little. It's getting cooler, isn't it? Let's draw up the blanket."

Assured that it could not hurt anybody if she did not sleep, June promptly dozed off. Such is the power of suggestion.

Breakfast over at Buffalo, the girls were writing cards home while waiting for the train to Niagara. While they were thus engaged in a corner of the waiting room where they had deposited their baggage and one or two parcels which had already been added to the impedimenta, a bright face peeped around the corner. "O, here they are, Cathalina!" and with this Lilian North, smiling and happy, made her appearance.

Everybody jumped up. "Where *were* you children?" inquired Hilary from Lilian's embrace. "We thought you had missed a train or something."

"No, Phil brought us in the auto, rather the chauffeur did, but Philip was the official care-taker. Here he is, with Cathalina."

Hilary was wondering how Lilian happened to come in the Van Buskirk car, but there was no time to ask at this juncture.

Meanwhile Philip was saying to Cathalina, as they approached, "My, Kitten, must I be introduced to all that bunch?"

"O, yes, and remember 'em, Phil, if you can. You know Hilary, of course, and that is June, her little sister, and Evelyn is that graceful little thing farthest away. You'll know her by her Southern speech, and Helen, too,—with her rather especial drawl. I don't know the rest myself. There's Patty, too, just joining them."

Evelyn's eyes and lashes, drooping or raised, went into effect immediately upon introduction, and Philip's courtesy responded to her grown-up ways; but as there were two many girls for one young gentleman to entertain, he remained by Lilian most of the time, holding her extra coat and hand-bag with entire content. At train time, however, Philip helped as many of the girls as possible, settled them in the train, shook hands all around, kissed Cathalina and swung himself off in good time. Many girlish eyes followed him, and their last view was of a tall, good-looking, dark-eyed boy, touching his hat and looking chiefly at—Lilian.

"I never saw Phil so taken with a girl," whispered Cathalina to Hilary at the first chance. "We were motoring through and stopped all night at Rochester, when whom should we meet at the hotel but Lilian and Judge North. The Judge had business at Rochester and was going to put Lilian on the train for Buffalo. We could have gone to Charlotte, of course, to wait for the boat from Toronto,

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but both Lilian and I wanted the whole trip with you girls. We had a fine visit yesterday as we drove,—I was so glad for Mother to know our Lilian better, and Lilian was at her brightest and sweetest and prettiest.”

“And that is rather attractive,” inserted Hilary.

“You can see that the Judge just loves her to pieces.”

No sooner was the party off the train at Niagara than a capable official appeared. Arrangements were at once made with him to transport the party by auto to the station from which they would next depart and to take them upon the sight-seeing tour as soon as their baggage was safely checked.

Through the park, to different points where the American or Canadian Falls could best be seen, the girls rode or walked with little conversation. They stood silently before the majesty of the waters, watching the feathery flow over the American Falls, or a glittering green cascade on the Canadian side. On little bridges which led to rocky islands, they watched the whirling rapids above the falls. Sometimes the mist blew into their faces.

“May we go under the falls, Miss West?”

“No, Marjorie; we’ll just do the safer, ordinary things.”

“That suits me,” said Hilary. “I want to look at the things the Creator made. Everything else

seems like a blot on the landscape, cheap, someway."

"Well, perhaps," answer Helen. "Still, we could not see the Falls as well if they did not have the bridges, you know. Wouldn't you've liked to be the first person that ever saw Niagara Falls?"

"Prob'ly some Indian."

"Yes, June, that didn't know what he was coming to and went over in his little canoe!"

"Now, Marjorie!" reproved Helen. "You can hear the thunder of it a long way off, and I'm sure that any sensible Indian would have landed his canoe long before he came to the big rapids."

The falls of Niagara never cease to arouse wonder and admiration no matter how many times the tourist may have visited them, and these girls were no exception to the rule. The amazing whirlpool rapids, where, tossing and tumbling, the foaming waters of Niagara river swept through the great gorge, impressed them almost as much as the falls themselves. The day itself, with its fresh breeze and sun upon the dancing waters, more than compensated for the tiresome trip of the night before.

Lewiston and a customs officer came next. At first the girls wondered why the herding of the crowd through the little gate to the dock, but the questions asked about their luggage made them realize that they were temporarily leaving their native land. So unmistakable a group of school-girls and

teacher, however, with the camp tags on suit-cases and bags, was passed on everywhere without any trouble. They were soon on board the boat for Toronto.

Out of the Niagara River into Lake Ontario the steamer moved, and it was not long before the water front of Toronto appeared through gathering fog and evening shadows.

"Does Betty know that we're coming tonight?"

"I think not, unless she looks up the time-tables. She knows that she is to leave tomorrow afternoon, and that we are to be at the Queen's Hotel. You will have plenty of time to visit with Betty on the boat tomorrow and the rest of the way,—let us have a good night's rest, enjoy seeing Toronto tomorrow morning,—"

"O, *please*, Miss West," begged Cathalina. "Just let us call her up!"

"We shall see," returned Miss West, weakening a little.

But by the time they had reached the Queen's Hotel, nice conservative old place with an English atmosphere and a "royal suite," the girls only wanted to get to bed as soon as possible.

"I'm on foreign soil," sleepily murmured June as Hilary tucked her in, and Hilary herself was too sleepy to laugh.

CHAPTER II.

DOMINION DAY IN CANADA.

WHEN Lilian woke the next morning, she dreamily looked toward the light of a grey, rainy morning and noticed the lace curtains stirring in the breeze. "How appropriate," thought she, "a crown and 'The Queen's' woven in the pattern." She glanced at Hilary and June sleeping in the double bed near. "Here we are, then, in Canada," closing her eyes. "I wonder if Philip will come up to camp as he said he would . . . isn't he fine? . . . how dark his eyes are . . . I wonder . . . and Lilian dozed off into an enchanting dream of motoring somewhere with Philip Van Buskirk, not waking till Cathalina, who fit nicely right into the dream, was shaking her and saying, "Wake up, Canada Lily, do you know we'll disgrace our nation and not get down before the dining room closes!"

Rested from their warm baths and good sleep of the night, fresh, smiling girls gathered in the breakfast room of "The Queen's". Miss West was proud of them and their quiet, dignified behaviour.

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“What do you think we had for breakfast, Mother?” wrote June a little later. “*Strawberries* and cream—thick cream! Think of it, on the first of July! I’m going to begin in March in Cincinnati and go north to follow up the berries till the season ends in Canada. I ordered ‘oatmeal porridge’ because it sounded so English, ‘bean porridge hot’, you know,—and it was the best breakfast food I ever ate. They had ‘English breakfast tea’ on the menu, too, but I couldn’t order that because I wanted cocoa, m’m, so good! Some of the cocoa you get traveling is horrid. But I’ll never forget those big, ripe, juicy berries that the waiter brought me. I felt selfish because mine happened to be the biggest. But you couldn’t change, of course, anyway, in public. Our waiter looked just like the English valet I saw the other day in a movie, so dignified and serious.

“I’ve gotten the traveler’s guide and things from the office and have learned that Toronto was founded as a French trading post with the Indians in 1749, and that it covers forty square miles. The name is from an Indian word and means ‘place of meeting’. The land was ‘sold to the Crown in 1787 by the Mississauga Indians for \$85.’ Think of it. It is the capital of the Province of Ontario and has a population of five hundred thousand. I don’t suppose I shall remember this, but I promised Father

that I'd try to learn some little thing about each place. I may add some more to this after we have taken our ride in the sight-seeing 'bus. Miss West has the tickets already; you can get them right in the hotel. We are to start about noon, for we had our breakfast so late that we shall not want any lunch till at least two o'clock. We are all packed up now, and leave on the boat about four o'clock, I think. We haven't seen Betty yet, or even called her up. When we started to, we found that nobody, not even Cathalina, knew her aunt's name or telephone number, but Betty knows when we leave and I'm sure she will be here or at the boat on time."

"Come, girls," said Miss West, "all ready for the trip and packed up to start after lunch? We'll go down to the lobby and see if the taxi has arrived."

And such an immense taxi it was. "I feel like a monkey," declared Jean, "climbing with both hands and feet up this tippy height!" The party occupied only two of the long seats, and those in front had been reserved for them. The man of the megaphone was hatless and active, collecting the tickets as well as imparting information. "There are two persons who have not surrendered their tickets," he announced, counting tickets and passengers.

Miss West looked up inquiringly. "I have all

your tickets together," he assured her. As the same announcement was made several times later, the girls concluded that it was a polite way of telling that two fares had not been paid.

At once the girls noticed that the city was decorated with flags and that the stores were closed. "This is Dominion Day," announced the megaphone, "same as your Fourth of July." Everything was "Limited", "Imperial", "Royal", "Dominion", or "Queen's", according to June. T. Eaton's seemed to be as important in Toronto as Marshall Field's in Chicago, and an unusual feature in which the girls were interested was the display of pretty gowns or other articles for sale in the front or bay windows of what had once been private residences, now absorbed into the business part of the city.

"How do you feel, June," asked Cathalina, "under the Union Jack?"

"All right. You've been in so many foreign countries that I suppose it does not seem strange to you."

"I never happened to be in Canada, and it is just as interesting as it can be!"

Different monuments and churches, Queen's Park, the University of Toronto and the Parliament building engaged their attention, and as they rode through Rosedale, a pretty residential section, the girls wondered if Betty's aunt lived there. At the hotel again, it was great fun to trail after the porter

who showed them the royal suite; but time was pressing, and while Miss West settled the bills the girls started for the dock, within easy walking distance. Still no Betty!

"I meant to get a picture of that funny little hotel 'bus," said Marjorie. "Is that our boat? Isn't it cute?"

"You'll be the death of me yet," laughed Jean. "A steam-boat cute!"

"What's its name?" continued Marjorie undisturbed.

"The Toronto; see?"

"Salve, Toronto! Vale, Toronto!" remarked Hilary.

"What does that mean?" asked June.

"It means 'hail, Toronto,' the boat, and 'farewell, Toronto,' the city."

As they came nearer the dock, some one jumped out of a taxi and waved. It was Betty at last.

"Why, Betty,—all alone?"

"Yes, Miss West, company came unexpectedly. I had a time to get packed up at all. But fortunately Auntie had bought my tickets yesterday, and my trunk came down this morning. I have been thinking of you all and could hardly wait to see you, but Auntie said you that would be taking in the city anyway. That was to console me."

The girls were fortunate in getting seats out in

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the very front of the deck. Their baggage had been taken to the little staterooms, cameras and field glasses brought out, and they settled themselves in great content for the trip by water from Toronto to Montreal. So far there had been so much sight-seeing that the visiting had been only incidental, though by this time the Greycliff girls felt pretty well acquainted with the three girls—Marjorie, Jean and Rhoda—whom they had so recently met.

Betty and Cathalina compared their adventures since they had parted at Greycliff.

“Mother said ‘how could she spare her little Betty so soon,’ for this little visit to Auntie first, then for nearly all summer at camp, home for just a peep at the folks, and school at Greycliff again!”

“Mine felt that way, too, but she said that it was a good opportunity for me to have the experience of a girls’ camp, while so many of us could be together and while we had darling old Patty to take care of us.”

“O, there are lots of councillors to do that.”

“Yes, of course, but then we know Patty so well.”

“Is Isabel coming, or do you know, Cathalina?”

“Yes; I had a letter from her soon after she got home. Her father had said that she could come. Did you know that Virginia Hope went home with her for the summer?”

“No. I rushed off home, you know, the first min-

ute I could. That was lovely of Isabel, and of Mr. Hunt, too."

"I suppose that Virginia will come to camp with Isabel, but she did not say so, and it might be that Virginia made other plans later. We shall know when we get there,—naturally."

"There is Jean sitting by herself. Come on over here, Jean," and Betty hitched her chair along to make room for Jean's.

"I was just dreaming and watching the water," said Jean. "Don't you love it?"

"Yes, I never get tired of it," answered Cathalina, "but Betty and I were talking about some of the girls we know at school."

"O, yes; what is this 'Greycliff' you girls talk about?"

"I'm afraid you would be sorry if we got started talking on that subject, but it is a girls' school, preparatory, with two years of college work, and Patty, Miss West, you know, teaches there. That is how some of us found out about camp, because she is a councillor there, too. Betty and I, with Lilian and Hilary, are in a suite together. Phil calls us the 'suite quartet', which is an awful pun. Philip is my brother,—O, yes, you met him at Buffalo. Of course you know about Helen and Evelyn, and we were just saying that perhaps two of the younger girls at Greycliff—Isabel Hunt and Virginia Hope—

would be at camp this summer. Isabel wrote that she is coming, but did not speak of Virginia, and Virginia is visiting there. She wrote a scrap of a letter only and did not think of it, I suppose. Then there is another of our especial friends whom we hope to see, Eloise Winthrop, a lovely girl that I'm sure you will like."

"Isn't it funny how you always get crazy about the school you go to?"

"O, I don't know, Jean," replied Betty. "You see Greycliff is unusual!"

"Last call for the first sitting." Thus from time to time the different dinner calls came. Dinner on the boat started at six o'clock, but the girls had decided that they did not want tickets. This was contrary to their usual custom, for Miss West considered that regular meals were a necessary part of travel. But the late and excellent lunch at the Queen's, together with a fine supply of sandwiches and pickles brought by Betty, and a quantity of fruit brought aboard by Miss West, made the girls lose all interest in dinner.

"Besides, you know, we'd better be careful if we have to stay on the boat all night." This from Marjorie, as the girls were drawing their chairs close together and Betty was passing out sandwiches and pickles.

"Don't give her any more pickles, then, Betty."

"All right, you shall have the rest, Jean. I love to see you so careful of Marjorie!"

"Let's stay out on deck as long as possible; may we, Miss West?"

"Just as long as you like tonight," replied Patricia, who herself enjoyed it outside. But they had nothing to dread, for the lake was calm; no motion of the boat was felt except the throbbing of the engine. Gulls flew high or low or rested on the water. It was cloudy and the sun, round and orange, slowly sank through and below the clouds, leaving for a little while a golden glow upon the water. The girls played a few of the guessing games when it grew dark, but finally the time came when the little god of dreams claimed his own. For some time June had been sitting with her head on Hilary's shoulders, when Miss West declared that the procession for the staterooms would "now start".

"Don't ring the bell as I did," admonished Jean, "I thought it was the electric button. You pull down the light and press the button to ring. After I made the mistake I locked the door and skipped out, so I wouldn't be there when the maid came."

"You needn't have worried. I was just across from you with my door braced open to air the place, and nobody came."

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"Thanks, Betty. You take a heavy load off my conscience!"

Nothing disturbed the serenity of the night. The girls were wakened by an early stop at Kingston and soon found themselves taking breakfast with the second "shift" in the dining-room. They were to transfer to the other boat at Prescott, but the Toronto was going very slowly on account of a heavy fog, and finally anchored for nearly an hour. When the fog lifted, however, the girls found a bright day before them. The turning of the capstan when the anchor was drawn up interested them not a little. The transfer was made to the boat which was to take them through the rapids.

From now on to Montreal the scenery was beautiful. It was the broad St. Lawrence with its Thousand Islands and rapids. The Merrymeeting girls were down in the dining-room when the first rapids were reached, and one or two looked anxiously at Miss West, who smiled reassuringly, and soon the churning waters were left behind, with nothing but one little grinding scrape to remind any one of rocks as the boat went through. "And perhaps that was our imagination," admitted June, as they discussed it later.

"I'm getting enough rocks at last," remarked Hilary.

"Why, do you like them so much?"

"Yes, Rhoda, ever since we started into the St. Lawrence I've been saying 'I love Thy rocks and rills, Thy woods and templed hills', even if these are not all of my own country. Look. There seems to be a sort of red rock as the foundation of the islands. There's a dear little one that I'd like to own. Think of a cottage there among the trees and a place for the water birds to build in the rocks!"

"You wouldn't like it in winter, would you?"

"No, nor in summer without a launch. But you mustn't be so practical, Cathalina, can't one have a little fancy?"

"Dear old Hilary! Purr-rr! Her shall have her little island!"

"Campbell likes the water, too. Wouldn't Thousand Islands be a lovely place for a honeymoon?"

"Sh-sh, Lilian, the other girls might hear and Hilary wouldn't like it."

"I should think Hilary wouldn't," commented the young lady herself. "Please, girls, why are you so silly?"

"Well," said Lilian, "when a certain young man finds out that a certain young lady is going to a camp and immediately takes steps to get himself appointed as councillor at a camp very near and under the same management, it looks as if there were some connection anyhow!"

Hilary smiled, but made a little pouting face at Lilian, as she moved over to where Marjorie and Rhoda were focusing their field glasses on more rapids ahead.

"O, the most interesting thing, Hilary," cried June. "I heard a gentleman tell his wife that there is only one pilot who can take the boat through the rapids, and he has to go up every day to do it. He learned it from his father, and his son is watching him to learn how."

"And did you notice," said Rhoda, "how he pointed out the 'American' or the 'Canadian' side? They are Canadians, too. It seems funny to me, for they are in America as much as we are."

"Yes," said Hilary, "but the books do it. It seems to be general."

"Look," said Marjorie. "See how the steamer changes its course, always going in the more quiet water. I can pretty nearly tell where we'll go. See the water tumbling over there! Big rocks, I guess."

"Yes, and did you hear the man say what a descent there is?—I can feel the boat going down hill!"

"We are really and truly shooting the rapids," said June with great satisfaction.

Mt. Royal, from which Montreal takes its name, could be seen long before the last rapids were

reached. Everybody was invited to the front of the boat while an official talked about the rapids, the Indian village on their right, and other points of interest. Safely through the Lachine Rapids the boat glided and reached Montreal at last. Some of the girls in the crowded motor 'bus, a few in a rickety victoria, the Merrymeeting party rode to the hotel where they were to remain two nights.

CHAPTER III.

VICTORIAS AND FURS.

IT WAS eleven o'clock the next morning before the girls were finally rounded up for breakfast or lunch, as they might choose to call it. For this they went to an attractive place not far from the hotel where June again found ripe strawberries, big and luscious.

"You'll turn into a strawberry, June," said Hilary, but June only pointed to the dishes of the same natural product on all the other trays in the cafeteria procession, as she replied, "I don't eat so many more than the rest of you,—I just say more about it."

"By the way, Miss West," continued Hilary, "we're going in victorias, aren't we?"

"How many vote for victorias?" asked Patricia, "hands up." Every hand at the little table went up, and as the girls at the table close by had heard the question, theirs as well were lifted.

"It is already arranged. Several of you had spoken of it—victorias it is. Now for shopping. I will go with Marjorie, Jean and Rhoda, for they seem to have the most to do. The rest of you meet us at the hotel in not less than an hour. There is a drug store right here on the corner, a department store half block in that direction. Keep in mind this corner and the way to the hotel. Hilary, you are in charge."

Hilary pretended to be much honored and the rest of the girls began to joke her by asking if they might do the most obviously proper things. But they had little shopping to do and arranged to meet at the entrance of the big store.

"Listen," said Cathalina, as they were returning to the hotel. "That boy has a French paper. I'm going to get one. I had no idea that Montreal was so French, though I heard some French spoken on the boat, of course."

"I heard a lady say that Montreal is fifty per cent French, and that of that fifty per cent ninety per cent can not speak English."

"No wonder, then, Betty, that they have both French and English on the shop signs. I should

like to spend a summer up here some time. No need of going abroad to keep up your French!" Later, Cathalina discovered that McGill University has many such summer pupils.

Duly at two-thirty, three victorias, drivers high in the air, rolled away from the hotel to see the Canadian city of Montreal.

"O, I feel so English," sighed Marjorie.

"Me, too," said Rhoda, "but I think they ought to be called 'Queen Marys' now instead of victorias!"

"Did you notice, Rhoda," drawled Helen, "what our elderly waiter said to you last night?"

"About my 'am sandwich'? Wasn't I good not even to smile?"

"You were indeed, and so were the rest of us, I think, though Lil gave me one look that almost upset me. She kept as sober as an owl, of course. I didn't want to make fun of any one, but I never heard the h's dropped, outside of a book or a movie."

"Did you ever *hear* it in either?"

"Well, you know what I mean!"

"Gently, girls, the driver might hear you," warned Miss Patty, who made the fourth passenger in this vehicle.

The first place at which the driver stopped was in front of Notre Dame Cathedral. The girls ran up the broad stone steps which led to the entrance.

Silently they entered, viewed the brilliant interior, the altars and shrines with their candles, walked quietly down the aisle to the right past a kneeling worshipper who was telling her beads before a shrine, and into a part of the building to the rear of the altar.

"I can translate that," whispered Marjorie to Cathalina as they looked at the inscriptions upon the wall. "'Silence in the holy place.'" (Silence dans le lieu saint.)

"Notice the Latin inscriptions, too,—'Oculos ad nos converte'—"

Hilary lingered a little to drop a coin into a box and came out with her eyes full of tears. "I've been brought up in another kind of service," she explained to June, "but this touches me some way."

"It's the Lord's house," replied June solemnly.

"And some people's faith and hope."

"Des Jardins," read Cathalina on the windows of a store where the victorias were stopping. "I did not catch what the man said and I was in the last victoria," she explained later to one of the party, "so imagine my surprise, after having translated it 'gardens' and expecting to find flowers, to see this wonderful fur store."

A great display of furs it was. The girls all longed to buy some at the summer prices, but had not planned for any large expenditures on this trip.

"Mother usually buys her furs up north," said Betty, "since Auntie lives there, you know."

"Look at the darling white moccasins!" Hilary and June immediately decided to purchase a pair for Mary, and several of the party bought the bead-trimmed, leather moccasins before they left Montreal.

The ascent of Mt. Royal was made by easy stages, around a beautiful, winding drive, past rocks and grassy slopes, interesting varieties of trees and bushes, skirting a bridle path part of the way, till finally the "look out", "La Terrasse d'Observatoire au Mont-Royal" was reached and a fine view of the city and river obtained.

"Just see me come up here some summer," said Cathalina, as she leaned upon the parapet next to Betty, "and read French while I live in some French family and talk it all the time."

When evening came, it was decided that in view of the long trip the next day no outside entertainment should be sought.

"Let's make it unanimous for bed," suggested Hilary, who intended in any event to see that June was early in the land of dreams. ,

"I vote with Hilary," said Jean. "My brain can't hold so much at one time. I can't remember all I've seen today!"

Helen, Evelyn and the three younger girls were

with Miss West in a suite of two rooms and bath. Hilary with June and Lilian, and Betty with Cathalina were in adjoining rooms not far away. Like the girls, Patricia dropped to sleep early, thinking about how perfectly everything was going about the trip, and how lovely and sensible her girls were. "And Cathalina has had so much experience in traveling." But if she had known what was happening that night scarcely the proverbial forty winks would have been hers.

Waking early, and dozing uneasily for a while for fear that she would oversleep, Miss West rose and dressed, wakened the girls that were with her, saw that they were really roused and getting ready, and went to call the rest. In the room occupied by Cathalina and Betty she heard voices as she tapped on the door. "Up already, are you?" she said, as Betty, fully dressed, threw open the door and several somewhat excited voices began, "O, Miss West,—"

"Where did you find the pocketbook?" Hilary was asking Cathalina.

"Right there, on the floor."

"And was nothing but the money gone?"

"That was all." Cathalina was quite cool.

"What is this?" asked Patricia.

"Why, Miss Patricia, I seem to have been robbed last night,—but don't worry. I don't mind, really, though I wish I'd spent it yesterday!"

Miss West sat down on the bed. "Do you mean to tell me that your room was broken into last night? Tell me all about it. Did you wake up and see the robber?"

"Mercy, I hadn't thought that we might! Wouldn't it have been terrible? There isn't much to tell. You see we didn't lock the door—"

"I thought you girls always did that,—. O, if I had only come and tucked you all in!"

"It wasn't your fault at all, and really we meant to lock the door as usual. Indeed we do lock it, Miss West. You see, we were waiting for ice water and got too sleepy to have any sense, I guess. We rang and the boy didn't come, and then we waited a while and were just nearly falling over with sleep,—"

"After being out in the air all day," inserted Betty.

"But your door should have been locked until he came."

"Yes; we didn't know it wasn't. I put a tip on the table to have it ready, and I finally crawled into bed with my Kimono on, after ringing again,— and I woke up with it on this morning! The door was wide open, my purse on the floor and the money gone. Please don't scold, Miss West; truly we won't be so careless again."

"My dear, I never felt less like scolding, and am

only too thankful that nothing happened to you and that you were not awakened or frightened. But it is odd, Cathalina, for I thought of going in again to see if you were all right, then I thought 'Cathalina has traveled so much that she will let me know if they need anything' and went off to sleep more peacefully than usual! Do you remember how much was in the purse?"

"About twenty dollars, I think. I have some besides, that wasn't in the pocketbook, and my check-book."

"I was going to say that I can attend to all your expenses, of course."

"Shall I write Mother about it?"

"I wouldn't send a telegram," Betty suggested with a laugh.

"When you get safely into camp she will not worry. You can write the details then. It is safely over now and will teach us all a lesson in making sure that it is not too easy for some thief to get our money."

"It must be great to have your own check-book and money in the bank," whispered June to Hilary. "Is Cathalina awful rich?"

" 'Very,' not 'awful,' corrected June's elder sister. "Yes, you know how much I have told you about their lovely home and servants and everything. Cathalina has about everything she wants."

"I will speak to the hotel people about it, but I fancy that we shall never see the money," Miss West was saying to Cathalina. "Perhaps we can find out whether the bellboy ever came or not."

There was little time for any detective work. Breakfast must be eaten, bags packed, and an early departure made to the train. Cathalina dismissed the matter, and by the time the party was on the train bound for Portland everybody else seemed to have forgotten it. Patricia had an occasional shiver whenever she thought of her sleeping girls with their door opened by some prowler, but the necessary arrangements of the present often most fortunately crowd out the too vivid memory of some unpleasant occurrence.

"Here's our last look at Montreal," said Evelyn, as the train drew away from the city. "There are two square towers of Notre Dame."

"Goodbye, Mt. Royal," and June waved her hand blithely. Too many good times were ahead of them all for regrets.

"This is the Canadian Pacific bridge, I suppose," said Rhoda, "that we saw when we came down the river,—yes, there is the Indian village that hasn't any streets."

"I've seen my last French sign, I guess," remarked Cathalina. "It was at the crossing. 'Trav-

erse Du Chemin De Fer' was one cross-piece and 'Railroad Crossing' on the other."

They were comfortably settled for the all day trip to Portland in a chair car and looked very serious when an official appeared to ask them if they had bought anything in Canada. They began to open their suit-cases or bags and told of their moc-casins at once, but in their sincere faces the most suspicious of custom officers could find no guile.

"It's the Green Mountains that we see first, girls, then the White Mountains. The conductor said so." Jean was looking at the map in her folder. "And we're not in the United States right away after crossing the St. Lawrence."

As Hawthorne's Tales of the White Hills are usually read in that department of school work known as "English", these girls were quite interested in finding, among post cards bought on the train, a photograph of the "Great Stone Face". "I hadn't thought of it myself," said Patty, "that these are Hawthorne's White Hills at last."

"This scenery is the most lovely of all we have seen," said Lilian.

They had been watching the clouds floating about the hill-tops, little cascades leaping down the rugged heights, pretty glens, little streams, lakes and rocky cliffs. Yet beautiful as the scenery was, no one could keep in a state of rapture all the time. At

intervals Cathalina read her French papers. Other papers and magazines were passed around, or the girls chatted happily about many things. It was a day to be remembered, and interesting to have celebrated "Dominion Day" in Canada, this "glorious Fourth", or most of it, in New England.

"What do you think about it, girls?" asked Miss West of a few near her, as they were nearing Portland. "Was it worth the trouble to take the trip?"

"I wouldn't have missed it for anything," cried Marjorie, and seemed to express the general sentiment.

A sight-seeing trip in Portland the next day showed them its buildings and parks, and Casco Bay with its schooners, sail-boats and freighters of all sorts. On Congress Street they saw the home of Longfellow, "next to Keith's!" This struck the girls as particularly funny. "'From the sublime to the ridiculous' both literally and figuratively," said Hilary.

The journey to Bath seemed incredibly short in comparison with the long trips which they had been having. It was the Maine country, with its buttercups, daisies, wild roses, evergreens, and the aged rocks peeping out here and there,—and now they had arrived at Bath, with nothing but a boat ride between them and camp!

CHAPTER IV.

CAMP AT LAST.

"OUR luck has turned, girls; it poured at Portland and is drizzling here!"

"But we've had lovely days for all the important sight-seeing. Do you remember how perfectly bright and wonderful it was that day on the St. Lawrence? The water sparkled and foamed, and the sky was so blue,—"

"Listen to Lilian, our optimist," spoke Hilary. "She's our mascot for good weather. By the way, Miss West, I have to get some sneakers and a bathing cap in Bath."

"So do I," said Evelyn and Betty together, whereat they turned, made mysterious signs and repeated "thumbs" together.

"How many million years have girls done that?" asked Patricia. "We shall have quite a little shopping to do at Bath, but all the stores are near together. I need ink, some tablets and magazines. Whoever comes down the river for us will probably have a lot of errands to do, as usual. We'll do ours and then go down to the dock and wait. It will not be later than four o'clock, I think, when we start up the river."

"It was the little Papoose from the boys' camp that came for them. On account of the drizzle, the canopy was up, an affair not unlike the top of a prairie schooner, but, alas, not as high. Some of the occupants had to assume a bending posture. Helen declared that she had a "puhmahnent cuhve" in her back, and for weeks Hilary referred to the submarine stunt of their first arrival. But it was fun to peep out at the water, the rocks, and the green trees that lined the banks, and the Papoose safely chugged her way to Merrymeeting.

"Here we are; hooray for Merrymeeting!" cried Jean, as she stepped upon Merrymeeting's floating dock and ran lightly up to the more solid portion above the washing of tides; for the Kennebec is affected by the sea tides, and as far up as Merrymeeting Bay there is a difference of from six to eight feet in the depth of the water, according to the tide.

Up the little rise they filed to the level ground which stretches broadly at the river front and holds the big dining hall and the boat house; then again they proceeded up the gradual ascent to the Club House, which is the center of Merrymeeting life. There the girls were welcomed and assigned to the different "Klondikes" or cottages. The other campers and councillors had only arrived at noon, hence a scene of great activity. Basins and pitchers

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were being given out. Cots and mattresses were being placed or changed in tents and klondikes. Trunks were being delivered and directions of all sorts given. In spite of the damp grass and misty atmosphere, everybody seemed happy, the old campers glad to get back.

"You don't know how lovely it is here," said one and another to the new comers. "Wait till the sun comes out!"

Already Marjorie, Jean and Rhoda had joined girls whom they knew in school in Cincinnati. Hilary knew a few more of them, though she had not lived there very long. The Greycliff girls had asked to be together, but Patricia explained that assignments were usually made on account of age. "We have Seniors, Intermediates and Juniors. And then you don't want to be in a separate group, do you? There are girls from several different private schools and high schools in different cities, East and West. You will lose sight of other organizations and just be Merrymeeting campers together."

"That is much better," acknowledged Hilary at once. "I did not think of it. Of course we don't want to be a little club by ourselves!"

"However," continued Patricia, "for another reason I want to put you four Greycliff room-mates together. Helen and Evelyn are to be together in a different klondike. June will have to go to "Laugh-

a-Lot", and I shall be there, for a while at least."

"O, good!" exclaimed June, who had felt a slight qualm at the idea of being separated from Hilary.

"Here, Frances Anderson," called Patricia to a tall, fine-looking girl who was passing. "Aren't you at Squirrels' Inn? I thought so. Please show these girls where it is—Hilary Lancaster, Cathalina Van Buskirk, Lilian North and Betty Barnes,—" with which brief introduction Miss West was off to see about some affairs of her own, June's hand tucked under her arm.

"Squirrels' Inn!" exclaimed Lilian. "Our future residence?"

Frances was friendly and enjoyed initiating the girls into the way of camp. They stood chatting a few minutes, then moved on over the wrinkled gray rocks and grass around the Club House toward Squirrels' Inn. But a gay voice called them before they had gone far.

"Cathalina Van Buskirk! Hil and Lil! Betty! O, joy!" From the "Wiggly" side of the double cottage called Piggly-Wiggly, who should come running but Isabel! "Have you seen Eloise? She's down at her klondike getting settled."

"At Squirrels' Inn?"

"No; the one down by the pine grove. May I come over with you? I was just over with Eloise and met Helen and Evelyn going to the same cot-

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tage. There are a lot of girls down there. We've got a house full too. Such doings! I'm crazy about this place already."

On to Squirrels' Inn they went and met their young councillor, with two more girls, Marion Thurman and Nora McNeil. A busy time followed. This klondike at first arranged its cots on one side and trunks on the other. Wiggly, where Isabel escorted the girls later, had a cot and its trunk, then another cot with its accompanying trunk, and so on, around the big room. "I like your cottage," said Isabel, "because it has that back porch hanging over the hillside, so convenient for drying or sunning bathing suits or bathrobes."

"Trust Isabel for finding all about a place in a few hours," remarked Cathalina. "It would be a month before half that Isabel sees in two minutes would make any impression on me."

"Why, I thought you had traveled a good deal, Cathalina; don't you notice things?"

"Yes, what I'm interested in, but Isabel sees everything."

"O, Mother only put in two sheets!" This came from Betty, who was diving into her trunk. "Yes, here are some more."

"My, Cathalina, your steamer rug looks nice over your cot!"

"I've got a big grey army blanket."

"Just look at Betty's Indian blanket! Who gave it to you, Betty?"

"My Aunt; I got it this summer in Canada."

"I think we'd better spread our ponchos over our cots, don't you? It's so damp tonight."

"I haven't any."

"Very likely there are some at the office that you can buy. You'll probably want one."

"I have a good rain-coat."

"Just the thing; spread that over your blankets tonight."

"There's the supper bell. We have dinner at noon, supper at six. Come on, that's the second bell."

The old farm bell hung high, as it had when Merrymeeting was a farm and was swinging and ringing cheerfully, while one of the little girls pulled the rope, by orders from headquarters. Down hill the girls ran or walked to the big dining-room with its long tables.

"We can look right out on the lake, can't we?" said Betty.

"River, you mean, don't you?"

"Yes, of course; but doesn't it make you think of a lake someway? It is so broad here."

"It makes me think more of the St. Lawrence," said Cathalina, "with the islands and the rocks and the pretty rippling water."

"Those little islands are the Burnt Jackets. Didn't you notice that your boat rocked a little coming through the Burnt Jackets? The Indians named them."

At supper it was announced that the first Camp Fire would be at the Club House shortly. The bell would ring. Duly the big family assembled, stopping, many of them to look at the glorious rainbow which was appearing in the East. "O, it's double, girls!" said Isabel.

"Didn't you ever see anything like that before?" asked one superior damsel, going on inside.

"Chile, dat means it's goin' to cleah up," replied Evelyn in her best dialect.

Within it seemed like bedlam for a while till a whistle blew and one of the older girls took charge as leader of songs and cheers, and one of the councillors who sat on the floor among the girls tuned up her "light guitar". There was a piano, but it was not used at this first Camp Fire. In the big fireplace the wood fire glowed and cracked, drying a long line of shoes which stood before it, filling the Assembly Hall with comfort and good cheer, and reminding some of the campers from the hot cities that they were up in Maine.

"A few things to be remembered, girls," said the head councillor. "The first bell in the morning will be for the dip, at seven o'clock, but there will be

none tomorrow morning, not until the next Friday morning. At five minutes of eight the bell rings for setting up exercises. Come promptly, down by the dining-room. Breakfast is at eight. Right after breakfast you go back to your klondikes to get them in order for inspection. You receive a certain number of points for neat order and a banner goes every week to the most orderly klondike.

"The plans for the games and the teams will be announced. We are going to have all kinds of good times. You all have a special place to fit in and will be on a team. There will be a hare and hounds chase soon, a Mystery Hunt that I can not tell you about or it would not be a mystery, tournaments and a swimming meet and a picnic down at the boys' island. Until the canoe tests no one is allowed to go out in a canoe. And only in groups of three or more may you go into the pine grove. We never have had prowlers, but take no chances. No girl ever goes off the grounds, and your councillor should always know where you are."

"About the candy, please?"

"When any candy is received in camp, the girl is called to the office, opens the box herself, is given half a pound and the rest goes into the general supply. Occasionally a dish of candy will be on each table at the dining-room. And by the way, Lilian North has the first box of candy. Go and get it for

her, Frances. Come, Lilian, it came before you arrived. You may open it and pass it around now if you like."

It was quite evident that the box was a surprise to Lilian, but she rose to the occasion, opened the big box on the table in the little room at the end of the assembly hall, slipped the card it contained into her sweater pocket, and amid applause and cries of "What's the matter with Lilian North?" or "Speech, speech!" passed the box around, first throwing little handfuls of bonbons into the laps and upstretched hands of the smaller children.

"My, your father is good to you!" exclaimed June innocently, as Lilian sat down by her chums again. Hilary looked mischievous and Cathalina pretended to lean against Betty for support. Lilian's cheeks were rosy with blushes, but she carried it off well and kept her hand on the card in her pocket till she should have a good chance to look at it privately.

"Everybody in on this yell!" announced the cheer leader:

"One, two, three, four!

Three, two, one, four!

Who for?

What for?"

What y' going to yell for?—

Merrymeeting!"

CHAPTER V.

FROM LILIAN'S DIARY.

JULY 6, Thursday.

I see that this little book is going to be full before the summer is over. It is just as well that Father gave me this pretty diary with the key, for some of the things I shall write will be very private and special. I do not believe, though, that I shall write out my thoughts much. I did that once, and they seem so silly afterwards, when you have gotten older. However, I'm nearly grown up now.

Last night there was a gorgeous rainbow and this morning when we started down to breakfast every little spider had its cobweb out, (tune of "ev'ry little wave had its white cap on, white cap, night cap, white cap on"), and that means a nice day. Sure enough, it wasn't long before the sun shone out and showed how perfectly lovely it is up here. I'm wild about the scenery. One of the councillors said that the bay looked like "liquid sapphire", which was very good indeed, for it reflected the blue of the sky. I'll try "liquid sapphire" in a "pome" sometime. Merrymeeting Bay is on our right, to the

west of our point, and is where five rivers meet. It certainly does look funny to see the current, or apparently the current, going the wrong way between our point and that of the mainland opposite on into the bay. I thought at first this morning that the way I had considered down stream must be up stream and that I had been turned around as to directions. But I soon found that this was only the tide coming in! We are six or seven miles from Bath and almost fourteen from the sea, I believe. There is the dearest island just inside the bay. Somebody lives there, for we see a house and boat.

The girls call the gymnastic exercise that we have just before going in to breakfast the "upsetting exercises". It is fun, for the athletic director gives us some exercises different from any I ever had before. My voice lessons have made me able to do the deep breathing performances easily. I didn't take much gym last year in school, had too much else to do, or thought I had.

At breakfast there were some announcements, about how many points one makes in the different things, for orderly klondike, for being quiet in rest hour, and after the last bell rings at night. I couldn't begin to remember it all. But I can find out gradually, I think. Then we get points for hikes and the games, and for bringing in the wild flowers and identifying new birds. I'm going to

see how many I can make. Each year there is a silver cup given to the best all around camper among the seniors, among the juniors and among the intermediates, and on your head-band you can have the cutest things for what you have done. Frances had so many on the one she got last year. Everybody has M. C., for Merrymeeting Camp, and two cunning' little pine trees on each side of those letters. Frances has a tennis racquet, a volley ball, a baseball, a paddle, a shoe (for hiking), and the dearest little musical notes. I think I can get the notes, and I'm pretty good at tennis, though I've never played the other games. Old Hilary will shine in basketball. How I'd love to get the Merrymeeting ring or a pin, but not very many get those, I guess. You can not buy them, just win them.

At eleven o'clock we had our first swim, in the cove by the pine grove. That makes a good rhyme and I'm going to put it in a song perhaps. It is the most fascinating place! You feel like an Indian stepping on those generations of pine needles and do not make a bit of noise. There is a narrow winding path with sweet fern and other ferns and green moss and all sorts of pretty things by it, just before you get in under the thickest trees. Then you climb down over roots and stones to the big rocks that line the cove. This is almost a complete circle of rocks, well, there is quite a space where

they have a rope and pole beyond which the girls do not go. Cathalina said we all looked like mermaids. She didn't go in this morning as she took a bit of cold on the boat. The swimming teacher was there and in a boat near were two more of our gentlemen, ready to rescue us, I suppose, if we did anything foolish. The girls who can not swim paddled around where the water is shallow. It is only at high tide that the cove is well filled, they say. We have a swimming teacher, an athletic director, a doctor, a nurse, and more interesting folks that I do not know yet. All the girls that I have met are pleasant and friendly and are of all descriptions as to size and looks. Some of them are tutoring a little with some of the councillors.

Now the most interesting thing of all. I had a box of candy from Philip Van Buskirk. It seemed to be a four or five-pound box and was full of the most delicious kinds that just melted in your mouth. Philip certainly does know how to choose candy. It was sent from New York and he must have mailed it as soon as he got home. Word was sent me from the office by one of the little girls that a box was there for me, but I thought that it was just the middies that were to come from home, and in the midst of getting settled I forgot about it till it was announced at the Camp Fire and the box brought in. It flashed over me that perhaps Phil

had sent it, because he had been so perfectly lovely to me from the time we met at Rochester. We talked music and other things almost steadily or we all sang together and Phil has a perfectly adorable voice. And when he put down my coat and things on the train as we started to Niagara he bent down and said close to my ear, "You are going to hear from me soon." I looked up at him and laughed, and just then Cathalina spoke to him.

Philip has been brought up to do all the nice things that gentlemen do when they can, but I don't believe that he is a flirtatious boy and I do believe that he really likes me and that we can be good chums whenever we meet. I am crazy to hear him play. Imagine having him play an accompaniment for me!

But I'm not finishing about the box. I slipped the card quickly into my pocket and looked at it afterward. "Philip Van Buskirk" looked so distinguished, and so does he, for that matter. The girls were lovely, did not ask me a word about it, although I know Hilary was dying to be sure that it was from Philip. He is very kind indeed, but there is no reason for being silly about it. He probably sends candy to other girls. His manners are just perfect, and he seems so grown up and serious, some way. I ought to write a little note of thanks, I suppose, or would it do to tell Cathalina,—no, that

wouldn't do. O, I didn't bring a bit of real good stationery along! I refused to write to any of the boys at home, said I wouldn't have time but would send cards to the entire crowd. They were all so good to me the short time I was home.

This afternoon the girls had a circus in the big barn and initiated all of us new girls. It *was* a circus, indeed! Some of them were painted up as clowns and looked perfectly killing. The old girls got it up with the help of the athletic director. We girls sat on the hay in the high mow and slid down or climbed down when wanted to take the center of the "stage", which was on the main floor, also covered with hay. Some of the stunts were very funny. Hilary and I had to sit down back to back, with our arms locked,—in each other's,—and then we were to rise. We couldn't do it at all and got to laughing so that we just fell over in the hay! Several other pairs of the ones to be initiated tried it and we all declared that it couldn't be done. Then it was announced that two councillors would try it and show us how it could be done. We thought that it would be a joke on the two councillors that were asked, but didn't they do it, though not without some trying! There was great applause.

We had some visitors up from the boys' camp and Brushwood Lodge, where fathers and mothers can stay. Some of their councillors were up, but

we didn't see anything of Campbell. If Hilary teases about Philip, I must not forget Campbell's interest in her!

As Isabel says, "more anon". I'm afraid that this will be a scrappy diary. I'm sitting on my cot to write. Nobody is in the klondike now, but Nora McNeil, whom some of the girls call "Pat" or "Irish". I think that sounds a little too much like boys. Not many of the girls have nicknames, but those that have do not seem to mind it.

It must be nearly time for the supper bell,—yes, there it is.

Isabel ran in at this moment and carried Lilian off with her. "I brought over Cathalina's sweater. She left it in Wiggly after the circus. Say, Lilian, I've counted eighteen canoes beside the war canoe. It holds seventeen by actual count of seats. Aren't they the prettiest things?—that deep blue and all painted up new!"

"You are like Shakespeare, Isabel, closing up your speech with two lines that rhyme."

"What?—O, 'blue' and 'new'. Yes, I'm a great poet."

"Can you paddle, Isabel?"

"Just a little, but I want to learn to do it well. I can swim if I do tip over, but I want to be an ex-

pert, ha-ha!" and Isabel struck an attitude of great dignity.

"I think that most of the Greycliff girls can swim, but I want to get the strokes that this teacher will give us. I do think it important to be a good swimmer if you have the opportunity to learn. Father will be so delighted if I do these things."

"We've been assigned to tables. Goodbye; I must hunt mine up."

Lilian found herself with a new councillor and a group of girls entirely unknown to her, but it does not take long for campers with common interests to become acquainted.

"Who serves first?" asked one.

"The girls next to me," replied the councillor. "Two serve for three meals, then two others the next day, and so on, moving around the table." Little girls, as little used to responsibility as Cathalina had been, took hold as cheerfully as could be, and brought in plates of bread and butter, pitchers of milk, dishes of steaming potatoes or platters of well-browned fish.

"Did you see the big fish?" asked one of the girls.

"No; what fish?"

"There was a four hundred-pound sturgeon caught up the river."

"Four hundred pounds! You are joking."

"No, indeed. We asked how they got it into the

boat, and they said it was just like a log, too heavy to fight. They cut it up and shipped it to Bath in a barrel!"

"What a fish story!"

"No, honest, some people that live on the river caught it."

"Ting-a-ling," the bell at the head councillor's table. First a bird hike was announced for an early hour the next morning, the bell to ring at a quarter to six. Our Greycliff quartet especially gave attention to this and nodded at each other as members of the Greycliff bird club.

The next announcement created universal joy and was to the effect that the Aeolus and Truant would take out the campers for a ride on the river and that the girls who had been at Merrymeeting before and could paddle might take out the war canoe. There was great applause and a hurrying on the part of the experienced paddlers to select paddles and run or slide down to the dock.

As Lilian and Hilary walked down, one little girl came up the hill crying. "O," said Lilian, "what is the matter?"

No response.

"Come on with me and have a good time," said Lilian coaxingly.

A councillor appeared hurrying up the slight ascent after the child. "She is homesick," she ex-

plained, "and when she thought she could not sit by me she said she wouldn't go." Kindly the young councillor led her along and finally got her on the boat. The girls saw her later, contentedly watching the gulls which flew about the landing as the boats started.

Everybody had been longing to get out on the water on this ideal day. Blue, rosy or golden, the sunset colors stained the waters with like reflected hues. The start of the war canoe was funny indeed. No one was in practice and as Isabel said, the paddles were going in ragtime in spite of the regularly called time. But by the time they were fairly out in the river the paddles swept in unison. Girls sat both within and on top of the *Aeolus*, and out on the front and rear of the *Truant*. A pretty sight it was as they floated out into the sunset, and there we may leave them, knowing that we shall find them in their klondikes in the morning.

CHAPTER VI.

A COSTUME PARTY AND A TRIP TO BATH.

SQUIRRELS' INN contained a congenial group. There were the four Greycliff girls, Cathalina, Hilary, Lilian and Betty, with whose characters and talents we are fairly familiar by this time. Frances

Anderson was one of the strongest girls in camp, a good, all-round, dependable girl, having ideas of her own, but what the girls called a "good sport".

Nora McNeil was as tall as Frances and had soft, fluffy black hair, big blue eyes, and the complexion that goes with this Irish combination. She was slight and active, as happy as the rest to be in camp, for this was her first year, too, and she was experiencing all the thrills of a first time.

Marion Thurman was an Eastern girl, using the soft a's, the r's omitted or softened in certain places and put in in others, characteristic of New England speech. Her long hair was in shining black braids that usually hung Indian fashion over her shoulders. Large, expressive hazel eyes, a straight nose that was Isabel's admiration, and a sweet mouth, gave expression to a very bright, attractive face.

All the girls were sensible, having no trouble over the daily program of keeping the klondike in order, going for the water, and performing the other small duties of common interest. Nobody was too lazy or selfish to take her turn, or refused to do it at the proper time. The Greycliff girls declared that Frances, Nora and Marion must all come to Greycliff for the next school year. Isabel and Virginia Hope came over once in a while to sputter about two or three girls in Piggly-Wiggly and on

this particular morning were sitting on the top of two wardrobe trunks in Squirrels' Inn.

"Bess Snider is a perfect baby!" Isabel was saying as she swung her heels. "At first she was homesick. I did not blame her for that, still when there are girls that would almost give their heads to come up here it does seem so silly."

"You can't help homesickness, they say, Isabel."

"I bet I could,—just think about something else."

"That is what I did," assented Cathalina.

"The next thing, Bess wanted to get out of dip and games and things and got up headaches and pains of all sorts?"

"Are you sure she was pretending?"

"No, and I'm not telling it around, but it was awfully funny how she could always do the things she wanted to do! But she could never take her turn about sweeping, and we were always hanging up her bathing suit to dry for her. If she could get anybody to do anything for her she would. If anybody even started to the club house it was 'O won't you please take this, that or the other thing for me.' I've carried up her laundry and brought her a drink of water and brought stamps for her and mailed her letters till I'm tired of it. She is getting over some things, but when she takes off her clothes at night she drops them right on the floor, even her good things, and she makes us have a

bad inspection every time the camp mother comes around, unless we watch her up."

"She is just spoiled," laughed Cathalina, with memories of a time not so far back when she had hated to do anythink for herself.

"There are several girls here who have maids at home," said Isabel, "and they don't do that way; they think it's fun."

"I'd like to be spoiled once," said Virginia, glowing beneath her second layer of freckles. She dropped from the trunk, sank upon the nearest cot, limply fell over on the pillow, and with a drawl, remarked, "Izzy, would you mind bringing me my comb? I left it on your trunk. And Cathie, do bring the water for me, that's a dear. My head aches so this morning. I think it's a mistake about its being my turn, anyway. My, I'm hot after games!" and Virginia fanned herself with the end of her middy tie.

"Pretty good imitation, Virgie," said Isabel. "She probably wouldn't have played the games, though, would have had a bad ankle or arm, or a pain somewhere."

"I couldn't play yesterday," said Betty. "I had taken cold in my shoulder or something. Do you suppose any one thought I was lazy?"

"If they did, they'll find out differently before the summer's over," replied Virgie.

Poor little Virginia had never been "spoiled" enough, or had enough real love in her life those last hard years on the ranch. But she had come out of it with a tough, firm little body, and a gallant little soul with which to meet adventures, good or ill.

"I am surprised at you, Margaret Virginia Hope," said Lilian, "that you are so hard-hearted toward Bess and condone Betty's sins!"

"Please cut out the Margaret, Lilian. Don't you remember how I told you that I had absolutely changed my personality? Margaret and Maggie died on the ranch."

The girls recalled Virginia's unhappy little story, confided to them, of the handsome-looking but rough-speaking and high-tempered stepmother whom her father had brought to the ranch, and how at last when her father found out the state of affairs he had sent her away to school and promised that she should not return for a time, if he could manage it. Virginia had been afraid that she would have to go back this summer and help, but her father's finances improved till he found that he could afford to send her with the girls to camp.

"What are you going to wear, girls, at the costume party tonight?"

"I'm one of the men," said Frances. "They always have me for one because I'm tall and have

short hair. I'm going to have Cathalina's scarlet sport coat and other appropriate togs, a burnt cork mustache, and a cane. We must pick our corsage bouquets this afternoon."

"O, yes; you have to get one."

"Yes, the gentlemen all send corsage bouquets to their ladies fair, call for them, take them to the party and take them home again. My young lady is 'way over at Pine Lodge, so I'll call for her with my coach and four."

"Four feet, I suppose, yours and hers," interpolated Virgie.

"Or I shall dazzle her with the headlight of my new Rolls Royce and startle all the mosquitos and caterpillars abroad."

"I remember, you just bought a big flashlight."

"And gently convey her delicate form,—"

"May Furniss is one of the fattest girls in camp!"

"Why spoil my lovely tale, Isabel? Yes, May's pretty plump and lots of fun, and as I'm almost the tallest and skinniest, we'll be quite a pair. We couldn't invite any girl in our own klondike, so I selected May."

"I'm to be a man, too," said Betty. "I've gathered a lot of the pretty red wood lillies already for the bouquet."

"Land, Betty, don't you remember who you're taking?—It's me!" exclaimed Virginia, somewhat

ungrammatically, to be sure, but forcefully, and wouldn't red lilies match my hair, though!"

"Sure enough," said Betty, frowning, but your hair isn't—"

"Yes it is,—sandy, anyhow. And I'm really much obliged to you, Betty, for forgetting it. I wish I could."

"Never mind, Virgie, I've a lot of white elder and some pretty green and I'll pick some buttercups and Canada lilies,—you'll be a 'symphony' in white and gold. Don't worry. Your beau'll send you the prettiest bouquet of the lot," said Betty, laughing, and put her arm around the shoulder of the little "forlorn hope" who had been so sensitive, so hungry for love and praise, and who had worshipped at the shrine of these older girls as much as ever Isabel, or Avalon Moore, had done. Even Marion Thurman, who in speech and manner was as nearly the opposite of the talkative little Westerner as could be, had taken a great fancy to both Isabel and Virginia and enjoyed their quite frequent visits.

"Listen, Marion; say your name for me, please."

Marion complied.

"There! What did I tell you, Isabel. She *can* say r, just doesn't in certain places. She gets it in Marion, but leaves it out in 'Thuhman'. See?"

"All right Virgie, you win. Say f-l-o-o-r, Marion."

Goodnaturedly Marion repeated the word, for these youngsters amused her, and secure of her Bostonian background, she it was who thought their speech peculiar."

"'Flo-uh'," repeated Isabel. "Evelyn calls it 'flo'. Isn't it the most interesting thing?"

"Turn about is fair play," said Marion. "How do you pronounce w-a-t-e-r?"

"Wawter," replied Isabel promptly.

Correct, go to the head. Some of the Western girls say 'wahteh', so flat."

"Not many of us," said Virgie; "besides, we say wawter, not 'wawteh'."

"I don't see the difference," said Marion.

The after-dinner rest hour found some of the girls reading, some napping, and others getting costumes ready for the evening. A few declared that it was too much trouble to get up anything special. "I'm just going to wear my linen camp suit," said one of the girls in Isabel's klondike.

"We were told not to wear real party dresses, only simple summer dresses."

"O, I borrowed Marjorie's pink georgette with lovely little flowers on it! Marjorie wanted me to."

"You may as well take it back, then, and put on one of your own frocks; don't you remember the head councillor said 'no borrowing' of good things?"

Helen Paget was going as Burnt Jacket, the In-

dian whose wet jacket, hung too near his camp fire on the island, had given it its name. Hilary was to be his Indian maid. Isabel was to be a pirate, and borrowed "Mother Nature's" rubber boots, to be decorated with red paper.

"I don't know whether Captain Kidd wore boots, or not, but I should think he would," said she.

A dangerous looking cutlass was made from a long curved stick, a pasteboard handle attached. A cardboard knife was covered with tin foil, which did not prove very durable when the knife was brandished in Isabel's most ferocious style.

The character taken was often chosen because of the possibilities for the costume which each girl saw in her wardrobe. Evelyn said that she would name her character after she got dressed. Perhaps the chief fun of the party consisted in getting ready, and the wonder was where the girls had managed to get so many ideas and such a variety of costumes, simple but effective. But the party itself was a great success. The girls acted out their parts with spirit, copied the manly walk of their brothers and friends, used exaggerated courtesy and devotion toward their companions.

One of June's little friends in Laugh-a-Lot looked especially dainty in her light summer frock and carried a corsage bouquet of wild roses and daisies. Her escort was a red-cheeked Spanish gentleman

with a fierce mustache and a mild expression. The gym teacher marshalled the couples in a grand promenade in the assembly room. By pairs and fours, platoons or circles, they marched or wound in and out. After this, they still promenaded and several engagements took place quite publicly, declarations, acceptance and the placing of the ring followed each other in rapid succession. Isabel swaggered in a trifle late with a stunning pirate bride, veil and all, and a "take her from me if you dare" expression.

"If the company will get quiet," announced the cheer leader, blowing a whistle, "while Madame Patti (Lilian) sings 'O Dry Those Tears', the distinguished Captain Kidd will be united to Miss Lucretia Borgia Vamp."

With much harmless nonsense and laughter the costume party went on, but closed quite early, for there was to be a trip to Bath the next day. As girls whose day has been quite taken up with many interesting activities are not loth to be "early to bed", the flashlights danced happily toward the different tents and cabins.

Everybody could go to Bath upon this first occasion. The regular morning program, with the games, was carried out, and the girls were to come to the noon meal ready to go to the boats. Many of them had been planning little shopping lists.

"What have you to get, Flo?" asked Miss West

of one of the "old girls", as she served those at her table to the hot dinner.

"I have to get a chocolate sundae and bring home a chicken sandwich," promptly and soberly returned that young lady, not at all understanding why Patricia should laugh at the expression "have to get".

"Haven't you any real necessities?"

"O, yes; I have to buy a present for my father."

"O, dear," said Betty, who happened to be at Miss West's table this week, "they said we could only buy a little half-pound box of candy."

"I've made a bet with my councillor that I'll not touch a piece of candy for a week. If I lose I have to give her a box of candy and if I win I don't get anything."

"A clear conscience, Flo," suggested Betty.

"That's funny," said another of the girls, "why wouldn't you get anything?"

"You see, I was the one that did all the betting. She wouldn't."

"Wait till I get home,—I'm going to have a regular candy eat!" This was a pretty little girl from Laugh-a-lot, and so fat that she was almost square. "But Mother said that was one reason she was sending me to camp, so I wouldn't want sodas and candy every other minute."

"What are you going to buy, Marjorie?—if it's not too inquisitive to ask, I need to have suggestions

on things I may need." Betty pulled out her list.

"A pair of hiking shoes, another pair of sneakers, besides, of course, some candy and a sundae. Which is the best place for sundaes?"

"Will the girls," came the announcement from the head table, "whose parents want them to have shoes in Bath, please rise? I have the list, but want to be sure that there is no mistake. What are you standing for, Mary?"

"I need rubbers."

"And you, Bertha?"

"I need rubbers, too."

"Very well. But girls that need rubbers will not go with this group. These girls will start first with Miss West, who will buy their shoes. They will go in the Truant and leave at once with a few others that I will send."

"Going to Bath" at camp is like going "down town" or "upstreet" at home. It is surprising how many little errands one thinks of when separated from the shops. The weather, too, makes more difference when at camp and dependent upon boats. But how great the advantages! How the girls all loved the camp life, enjoying all the more the occasional trips to the towns about. Today there was perfect weather, the river never more blue from an almost cloudless sky. An eagle swept across above the boat. A kingfisher dived into the water

near the shore. Yellow-billed gulls floated up and down with the movement of the waves. A little sand-piper hurried his flight from the rocks not far away to a grassy cove. The girls sang happily the Merry-meeting songs till all the shore dwellers must have known who was passing. As they passed Boothbay Camp, a few of the boys who happened to be about waved and gave the Boothbay and Merrymaking yells.

Arrived at Bath, each feminine party, with some councillor, applied itself to the delights of shopping, whether necessary or not. Patricia's party bought the desired hiking shoes or other covering for active feet.

Just before time to go to the boat, a certain time having been agreed upon, one of the drug stores was almost full of girls, and, indeed, councillors, having a sundae or soda before departing. Suddenly two of the little Juniors came rushing in and up to Miss West.

"O, Miss West, we've spent all our money and have just found the darlingest gold locket, only five dollars and a half, and we want to send one to our mothers. Please, Miss West! O, my daddy'll settle for it right away. Yes, he will. Yes, my mother will want it and I don't want it for myself at all. Please!"

The tears were very near, as the children worked

themselves up to the point that they must have the lockets and that it was mean that Miss West would not lend them the camp money or her own. But Patricia was firm, though kind, and succeeded in turning their attention to something else. Cathalina, who sat at a little table near whispered to Miss West that she would lend them the money. "O, not for the world," she replied. "Their parents have left money for them at the office and they can spend only so much. Of course they have no idea of the value of money, and we must manage for them."

But it was a very well satisfied group of children that started for Merrymeeting about four o'clock that afternoon, with their little boxes of candy and other trifles, as well as the more important things for which they had come.

CHAPTER VII.

MORNING IN MAINE.

ONE would not think that forty or fifty girls could go on a hike without making such a noise that any well regulated bird would immediately take to the deepest wood. Under the direction, however, of the little lady whom the girls affectionately called "Mother Nature", "Birdie", or "Puss in Boots"

when she donned rubber boots, the first bird hike was quite successful. The girls slipped quietly down the grassy road, or stood on the rocks together, and the little Maine warblers who were out getting their breakfast never paid a bit of attention. The big pine tree by the side of the road was full of pine siskins, and every so often a Maryland yellow-throat would pop up from some bush, exhibit his bright yellow breast and black mask, and drop back again.

The Greycliff girls, of course, had brought their field glasses, in the hope of discovering new birds in a different state. "Not a bit of wind this morning, and warm," said Hilary, "so of *course* the birds are out."

"I don't call this warm, this cool morning air," returned Lilian.

"I mean the bright sunshine and everything. O, look!"

A plump little indigo bunting, shining a bright green-blue in the sun, flew across the lane and dropped to the ground not far in front of them.

"Hark!" whispered Lilian. A Maryland yellow-throat was singing now; "We *greet* you, we *greet* you, we *greet* you!" as Lilian interpreted it.

"He does say that," confirmed Hilary. "It's funny, isn't it? They say he says 'wichity', but I almost always hear him accent the song differently.

The other day I heard one say, 'We beat you, we beat you, Phoebe!' "

"Let's go over on the rocks near those birches. I hear a lot of wood warblers singing over there."

Silently the girls climbed across rocks and bushes. It was indeed warbler land. Hilary, who lived where the warblers often pass through quickly in the spring migration, on account of hot days, was especially interested. "There are a lot of redstarts," said she. "I think that the ones we see near our cabin, and the yellow warbler there, too, are nesting in those bushes by us."

"I wish I could see the chap that's singing that song," said Betty, "Listen."

"Zee, zoo, zee-zee, zoo," hummed Lilian. "The 'zee-zee' is musical, a sort of whistle, but the other notes sound like an insect, or some low tones on a 'cello'."

"Say, Lilian, aren't you a scientist!" said Isabel, hitching along on the same rock.

"I am. I'm getting bird songs. That 'right here' of the chewink is new to me. See him?"

"Sh-sh!" The girls stopped their low conversation as the long, sweet notes of a white-throated sparrow began. Two or three others took up the fairy music, while the girls sat quiet to hear it.

"The dears!" exclaimed Cathalina, as the song ended.

"Of course those crows would have to caw," said Isabel. "I call them the dogs of the bird world, always barking like watch dogs to tell that we are here. Once I went into a dandy woods and the crows made such a fuss that I didn't see a bird."

"Did you ever see anything prettier than these blueberries?" asked Hilary. "They look like flowers growing over there on the big rocks and between. I shall always think of grey rocks, moss, lichens and blueberries. They match the sky and bay, don't they? The color of the little green plant is pretty, too. I shall never get them mixed with huckleberries again. These taller plants are a sort of blueberry, too, somebody said. They are dark, almost black, when they are ripe."

"I think I've eaten a quart already. I don't know whether to eat blueberries or look at birds," and Isabel put a fresh handful into her mouth. "There is a dark berry called dog-berry, so be sure you know the difference in the dark berries before you eat 'em when they're ripe. I'm not one of those that taste everything and get poisoned. Dogberries are poisonous. But these heavenly berries!"

"Look, girls!" called Mother Nature, breaking the laws of silence for once, that all might see the immense eagle which was flying over. "See his white head and tail."

The party moved on, for the hike was to cover

the distance to "First Trott's" and back. In Merry-meeting parlance. "First Trott's" marked a distance of a mile and a half to where lived a family by the name Trott, while "Second Trotts" was located a mile further out.

Birches, arbor-vitae trees, tall or tiny, balsams, white pines, oaks, and other trees characteristic of the Maine woods lined the way. Back in the shade of the pine trees grew that strange ghost flower, the Indian pipe. Isabel counted the slender trunks in one clump of young birches and found fifteen.

"I'm going to bring my camera here and take a picture of some of you girls sitting on that wonderful big rock that slopes back above this exquisite fern bed. These are so delicate."

"New growth, I guess," said Hilary. "But look at those across the road now. They are more than half as tall as Isabel."

"Take a leaf of this sweet fern between your fingers and squeeze it. It is just as spicy as can be. But we'd better hurry up a little," continued Betty. "The rest of them are ahead of us."

"Well, what is here!" exclaimed Isabel just then, stopping where on each side of the road there was a row of immense, brown ant-hills, built up high from the level ground. "They must be years old. See how the grass is growing out from the top of that one, and look at the big holes toward the bot-

tom! I suppose those are the tunnels going back from the openings.”

With interest the girls watched the busy inhabitants of this curious apartment house. “Looks like sawdust on top,” said one.

Along the more shady portions of the pretty, winding road few birds were seen. All seemed to be out where sunshine lit up their dining rooms. Occasionally a squirrel or chipmunk scolded them roundly, as the girls passed too near their place of abode. As they returned to camp, Hilary and Lilian lingered in the rear. “It was right here in these bushes,” Hilary was saying. “I did not get a good look at it all over, but I hope and think that it is a black-billed cuckoo, for I so seldom see one, that is, to be sure of it. Let’s creep up real softly and maybe we’ll see it. I think it stays around here.”

The cuckoo proved to be a very accommodating bird, for when they reached the neighborhood of the bushes, out it flew from one near them, retreating to one which was farther off, but had so much less foliage that the heavy bird was easily seen.

“It is!” whispered Hilary. “It lifted its head and I saw every bit of its bill. And when it flew there was no sign of black in its tail.”

“That will be another point for you, Hilary.”

“But you identified it, too.”

"Yes, but you saw it yesterday and thought it was the blackbilled."

"All right. Maybe some other girl has seen it, though, and reported on it first."

"I don't believe so. I got the black and white creeping warbler first while we were all at the rocks, you know, and I saw the least flycatcher first too,—two points for me on birds so far."

"Somebody reported the tree swallow this morning before I had a chance to, but I found its nest in the knot of that apple tree near the club house. Come on and I'll show you. Isn't it pathetic that those poor kingbirds have to watch their nest so, or think they have to?"

"Where?"

"Didn't you notice the kingbird's nest on the very end of the tree next to the klondike opposite us? There is a white string hanging down from it. You'll only have to look that way to see it. I suppose they never dreamed that all this crowd of girls would come, when they built the nest."

"Most of the birds are so hard to see. The foliage is so thick, and then they are nesting, too, and that makes them shy."

"Been on the hike?" asked Nora, as the girls reached the cabin. "I couldn't wake up enough. It's inhuman to expect anybody to get up before six o'clock."

"It was fine. Better go the next time, Pat," said Frances.

Later Lilian found that her little "zee, zoo" bird was a black-throated green warbler, and saw some baby ones in the bushes near the pine grove. Hilary soon had quite a list of warblers that nested about Merrymeeting. The gulls, chiefly the Herring Gull, came in numbers every day to be fed. A Laughing Gull was seen near Bath, and a Ring-Billed Gull near the boys' island. On the Wiscasset trip much later, a fish hawk's nest was seen on one of the piles common in the river. To the great amusement of the party one little city girl asked "How do the fishes get up there?"

After the birds had been duly studied, and the bright colored pictures put up in the club house as each bird was reported, the attention of the girls was turned to the wild flowers, of which there were so many. At first five flowers brought to the nature teacher gave one point. Finally, when the common flowers had all been reported, one of the rarer flowers made a point for its discoverer. Some funny mistakes were made, and no wonder, for why is not "pussy-foot" clover just as good a name as rabbit's-foot clover, or "scrambled eggs" as good as butter and eggs? And what is the difference between "church steeple" and steeple bush?

It was Cathalina who showed the members of

the Greycliff nature club the wintergreen with its waxen berries and the trailing arbutus plants along the lane.

"Are you sure it's wintergreen?" inquired the cautious Isabel before tasting the young leaves, as Cathalina invited her to do.

"Yes, it tastes just like wintergreen candy, or tooth paste!"

During the season, odd and beautiful bouquets adorned the tables at meals. Indian pipe standing high in a bit of greenery; Canadian lilies, wood lilies, meadow sweet, steeple bush, bunch berries, milk wort, Indian paintbrush, buttercups or daisies, fall dandelions in prickly juniper, wild roses as late as August, or the stately cardinal flower,—all these by turns found their way into the vases and bowls.

CHAPTER VIII.

CANOE TESTS AND A CAMP FIRE.

ELOISE in her red and black bathing suit and scarlet cap was a striking little figure. Lithe and active, she selected her paddle and flew down to the dock to select her conoe, for the canoe tests were in progress. "Wish me good luck, girls," said she as she pushed out her canoe from the sands and jumped in it.

Out beyond the dock and floats, toward the back water, a blue canoe, bottom up, was being steadily pushed to shore by some swimmer, whose bobbing head showed behind it. One girl had brought in her canoe, pushed its nose into the sand, and while drawing herself into a reclining position upon it declared that she was going to take a nap then and there. Another had gone out where the current was almost too strong for her and was having difficulty to manage a canoe that apparently wanted to go down the Kennebec and out to sea. She was making slight headway, while from the guarding rowboat came an occasional word of encouragement.

"I can't do it," she said at last. "I could swim it, but I can't take the canoe in." The rowboat approached and a dripping figure climbed over its side. Both girl and canoe were brought to the dock. It was Cathalina, her face solemn with disappointment.

"Better luck next time, Cathalina," said Betty, who was almost as disappointed as Cathalina, but would not show it.

"I'll wait till tomorrow before I try it again. Isn't it horrid? I wish I were a regular Samson!"

"You'll do it all right the next time. I don't believe I could have done it either if I had been

where you were. Go out toward the back water tomorrow. Here comes Lil. Good work, Lilian."

Betty had been successful in her canoe test, and while waiting for the other girls, was swimming or playing around in shallow water.

"Watch Eloise. There she is, just ready to tip over." Like a scarlet tanager in black and red, Eloise stood poised in her boat, handing her paddle to her guardian of the row boat, and waiting till the row boat drew off.

"There she goes!" Betty and Cathalina stood in the water watching, and Lilian paused in drawing in her boat to see Eloise perform her spectacular act, now on the edge of her canoe, tipping it, now going over and down, coming up in a jiffy and turning her canoe shoreward.

"Rowing is so much harder work than paddling," said Cathalina. "I'm glad that I'm learning canoeing, but I wish I were more at home in the water."

"The only way is to do it a lot, I guess," said Betty. "Let's do as much paddling as we can up here and go in for the races at school next year."

"I don't believe Mother and Father would let me race," said Cathalina.

"O, they never get up much speed at Greycliff."

"Anyway, I'm going to paddle all I can. Will you go out with me this afternoon if they let us?"

"Yes, indeed."

Wet and smiling, Eloise brought in her canoe. "Do you think I made it, girls?"

"Of course you made it!" cried the generous Cathalina. "I hope I do tomorrow if they have 'em again. If not, some other day. Where's Hilary, by the way?"

"She and Helen are together somewhere. They said they were coming down for the tests, but must have forgotten it. They passed theirs the other day, you know."

"O, Cathalina—Cathalina Van Buskirk!" called one of the councillors. The girls ran to get their bath robes and bathing caps, which were draped over the railing at the dock.

"Miss Allen is still sick today; why can't you take her French class? They can't afford to lose the time."

"Why,—I never taught anything in my life."

"But you have had plenty of private teaching, haven't you?"

"Yes; shall I do it that way?"

"Certainly. Anybody that can talk French as you can ought to be able to take these little girls through a couple of lessons. Give them some easy conversation and take them over the ground they

ought to cover in the reader. If you feel like hearing them recite their verbs, all the better."

Cathalina's discouragement over not passing the canoe test was gone and she hurried into her clothes, planning happily just what sort of a conversation she would conduct, delighted to be a good camper and help in something she knew about, if she couldn't bring in that canoe! "But I'll do it tomorrow, Hilary," she told Hilary that night in recounting the day's exploits, "see if I don't!" And Cathalina did.

That afternoon there was a hare and hounds chase. During rest hour some of the girls tore paper into pieces, to be dropped here and there for the trail. One of the councillors led the hares, who were to have a good start before the hounds, in charge of another councillor or two, should take up the chase. By the time the chase was ended there were few of the girls who did not know the ins and outs of the pine grove, the rocks, the meadows, the lane, and the trail along the back water.

Of the Greycliff girls, Hilary, Lilian and Virginia were among the hounds, that started after a certain definite time had elapsed. Everybody was talking at once and excitement was growing. As they knew that the start was to be made through the pine grove, the line of hounds headed that way from the club house.

"Here's the first paper!" shouted Virgie. "Come on! Bow-wow!"

Through the bushes, over the roots and rocks, slipping through the birches in what Hilary called Warblerville, they hurried. It was there that a dainty little redstart sat on the edge of a tiny nest to greet them the first day they wandered about Merrymeeting.


"Mercy! Do I have to climb that rock?" said one of the little girls.

"Over you go," and with two or three helping hands to boost, up she went, to slide down on the other side.

"Here's a clear trail," cried Frances, and the running hounds followed to the middle of a big meadow, only to find that the trail ended there and to return to the place where they had entered the field.

"Hilary, you go that way, Lilian that, and I'll go this way," called Frances, "and see if we can find the trail more quickly." Lilian found it and beckoned to the rest. At the edge of a ravine they paused.

"I bet they never ran down there," said Virgie. "They'd have to get right out again; let's go around and pick up the trail." But her plan was overruled. The whole party climbed or slid down, only to find that Virgie's surmise was correct and that



the hares had probably let one or two of their number fix this blind trail, while the rest of them went on to drop the paper in another direction.

Further on, in a bit of woods, the trail led them in a circle, where again the hounds lost time. Not once did they catch a glimpse of the hares and arrived at camp headquarters to find that they had been in for some time.

"That old engine sounds good to me," said Virginia, for the water was being pumped from the drilled well and pails of clear, cold water carried down to the dining-room for supper.

Hilary and Lilian were repairing damages and washing dusty faces and hands when Eloise, who had been a hare, came to borrow Betty's Indian blanket. "I'll take good care of it, Betty," she said. "How do I look in it?"—draping it around her shoulders.

"What is up?" asked Hilary.

"Our klondike gives the camp fire tonight and we are going to be Indians. Don't miss it. Helen's father sent boxes of the most delicious marshmallows you ever ate. Wasn't it nice of him?"

"Don't you want my steamer rug?" inquired Cathalina.

"I think not. If anybody needs one I'll send her over; thank you, Cathie. May has a duck of a

blanket, just a cotton one, such as they make bath robes of, and it is so gay and pretty."

"I suppose the camp fire will be on Marshmallow Point?"

"Yes; a real 'Injun' camp fire, where the Indians used to have them."

As the girls came down to the point upon the ringing of the bell after supper, a tall, stolid "Indian" met them and waved them to the lower rocks. Behind other rocks Indian head-dresses showed. Presently there appeared a group of dignified Indians, much painted, wearing feathers of a remarkable variety and draped in blankets or what made one think of that civilized garment known as the bath robe. While they posed, one of the girls from Pine Lodge read an account of the early days upon the Kennebec and Merrymeeting Bay when the point was a trading resort and place of meeting for the Indians.

"From the lodges along the Kennebec and from the camp fires of the Androscoggin they have come to make plans for peace upon Merrymeeting Bay. A captive maid is to be returned to the Kennebec lover from whom she was stolen and the wicked kidnapper, of another tribe, is to be sentenced to exile. Behold the council fire!"

Softly from behind the rocks, in the beaded Indian moccasins, other figures joined the first group

and with them marched in silent procession before the spectators. Then they circled round the camp fire, which was then lit by the chieftain.

After this interesting part of the ceremony had been watched by the audience (though not in silence, for the chief had some difficulty in getting his fire to burn), the other Indians lit their torches (flash-lights) from the camp fire and started a weird dance upon the rocks to the sound of an Indian drum beating in hollow tones. Presently the dance stopped and the Indians sat down in a circle around the chief.

"Bring forth the captive!" called the chief in a sepulchral voice. Then came an Indian maid, well hung with beads, her hands bound, her head bowed, as she walked between two Indian guards. While she knelt before the chief, Lilian's voice came from the rocks in "From the Land of the Sky-Blue Water". Like her prototype in the song, the "captive maid was mute", though she told the girls afterward that she longed to break her bonds, for a bug was crawling up her arm and a mosquito had just bitten her nose.

The girls played well their short Indian drama. The bonds of the captive maid were loosened and she was restored to the arms of her Indian lover, who glared dramatically at his rival, the captive

villain who was sentenced to exile and slunk away to his canoe, as pointed out by the old chief:

Far from the smiling Kennebec,
Far from thy lodge and tribe,
I bid thee go! Thy name shall be
A name for jeer and gibe.

The play over at this point, the attractive Indians now brought out the boxes of marshmallows and passed them around to the assembled company who had previously provided themselves with sticks. Afterward came the usual singing of the dear Merrymeeting songs and other favorites; and while Lilian's voice, never sweeter, floated softly in "By the Waters of Minnetonka," the waters of the Kennebec rippled past, and the same old moon which had looked upon the real Indians not so many years ago, shone down on the blithe Merrymeeting campers.

CHAPTER IX.

CHURCH AND A SUNDAY MOON.

IT WAS a glorious Sabbath morning. The waters rippled and sparkled as the tide came hurrying in early; but there was no bell for dip on Sunday morning and breakfast was put at a later hour.

The girls had been asked to come to breakfast prepared to leave on the launches for church.

"Where do we go to church, Frances?" Hilary asked.

"Sometimes to one of the little churches up the river, but often to Bath, for there we can choose churches of different denominations, go to our own or visit others."

Two boat loads started. Aeolus and Truant chugged their way down stream, through the Burnt Jackets and past Boothbay Camp, where a few boys waved and cheered; past Brushwood Lodge, quiet and lovely in its rocks and greenery; past happily sailing gulls and shores of solid rock and evergreens; past the little hamlet of West Woolwich, on down the river to the now familiar little town of Bath.

Hilary, Lilian and Cathalina looked closely at the island as they passed Boothbay Camp, to see if there were any signs of Campbell.

"I think that the church folks have already left, since there seemed to be so few boys around," said Cathalina in a low tone to Hilary. "The question is, will he go to your church, hoping to see you, or to his own church, and where will you go?"

Hilary colored a little and replied, "I should love to see Campbell, but I think that I shall go with you girls today, as I should plan to do in any case.

Probably he can't choose, but will have to take some group of boys."

"That is so," replied Cathalina, who was deeply concerned in her cousin Campbell's interest in Hilary ever since he had first met her on her visit to Cathalina. And now that Philip had been impressed with Lilian, Cathalina felt that she was living in an atmosphere of the highest romance. Confidences from all quarters were hers. Lilian had looked as conscious as Hilary while passing the island, for Philip might come at any time.

Campbell Stuart, meanwhile, trusted to no chance meeting. So far his responsibilities and labors in the early days of camp had prevented him from calling at Merrymeeting to see his cousin and her friends. But here he was at the dock as the *Aeolus* floated in, his blue eyes lit up with pleasure and his lips parted in smiles, as he lifted his hat to Hilary, Cathalina, and the boat load in general. And now he was helping the girls off and walked between Hilary and Cathalina, while Lilian and Betty fell in behind.

"How'd you get off, Campbell?" asked Cathalina.

"I just told the "boss" that I had a cousin and some friends at Merrymeeting whom I had not yet had a chance to see, and asked if I might not wait to walk with you all to church. Having con-

fidence in me, he said I might. So here we are," he concluded, looking down at Hilary's demure countenance.

The walk was all too short for all that there was to say, and at the church Campbell joined the masculine crew from Boothbay, which sat quietly under the observing eyes of the different councillors. After the service, however, the girls saw him for a few moments.

"I'm going to paddle up some time soon, and shall bring Phil up, of course, as soon as he finds he can come. If I don't come, you'll know it's because I can't help it, and I'll be there with bells on at the annual picnic. You be sure, girls, to come to our picnic at Boothbay, won't you?" Though Campbell addressed all, he looked at Hilary, who replied, "Indeed we wouldn't miss it for the world!" and Cathalina added, "So say we all!"

"How much of that sermon did you hear, Hilary?" asked Cathalina teasingly, as they climbed into the boat for the ride back to camp.

"Lots of it," said Hilary. "Don't think you can tease me so much, Miss Cathalina Van Buskirk. It was a good sermon, too, and made me think of Father in his pulpit preaching away and looking like a saint, as he is,—and Mother sitting in the pew so sweet and nice, and the boys, and little Mary. But I wasn't homesick, some way, just happy."

"You're a dear," said Cathalina affectionately. "You are our pretty, sweet old Hilary, so you are, and shan't be teased. No wonder Campbell,—well, here I go again! Excuse me."

"You are quite forgiven, Cathie. I don't mind, only not much before the other girls, please."

"Honestly, Hilary, and no nonsense, hasn't Campbell grown up in these two years?"

"Yes, he and Phil are both so different, I mean in the way of being young men and not just boys. Just think, it will be two years next Christmas since I was at your house! What fun we had! It was the nicest visit I ever had anywhere."

"We must have more of them. It isn't my fault that we haven't already."

"O, I know, Cathalina, but I have not been able to manage it. You have invited me often enough."

"I hope to take Lilian home with me from here."

"That will be lovely. Have you asked her yet?"

"Yes, and she has written home about it. Phil wants to have a fraternity brother, and with the cousins, we shall have quite a party. If you only could come!—even for just over the week end would be something. School begins a little later than usual this year."

"That will give a little over two weeks at home,—

unless we left camp a little earlier. But we couldn't miss the big banquet and all the fun."

"My, no!"

"Mother wrote that she wanted to see the camp, and I believe that we can arrange it. Phil can do the driving, so we won't need the chauffeur, unless Mother wants to have him. She can fix it all up as usual. Anyway there is plenty of room for us all. It will be a pretty trip, Hilary, and we'd stop a day or two in Boston and see Cambridge and Lexington and Concord, you know."

"O, wonderful! I have been thinking that I'd write to ask Father if I might not take that trip home with the camp folks. June can go back with the crowd."

"Don't do it; go back with us instead. You haven't been in New York in the summer. And if possible, I want Betty to go, too. Isn't it funny and nice how plans grow? I thought of Lilian first on account of Phil, then you on account of Campbell, and of all of you on my own account."

"This is the most wonderful world anyway. I never dreamed of having such good times before I went to Greycliff."

As Isabel and Virginia Hope sat at the same table this week with Hilary, she had to answer their questions as they all ate chickens and dressing for their Sunday dinner.

"Who was that perfectly wonderful looking councillor that was with you girls this morning?" asked Isabel.

Hilary gave the same reply that she had already given several times before dinner: "That is Cathalina's cousin, Campbell Stuart."

"Had you ever met him before?"

"Yes, when I visited Cathalina, almost two years ago. I met a number of her cousins and know them very well." This in an effort to forestall any comments about possible attentions to her on Campbell's part.

"He looks a little like Cathalina. Isn't he tall and skinny, though?"

"I should say that Campbell is very well built for a young man."

"He certainly is. Virgie, do you suppose that we'll ever have any one as nice to take us around? If he comes up to see you girls, you'll introduce him to us, won't you?"

"I most certainly will," laughed Hilary. "I think that Cathalina will be very proud of both her brother and her cousin and will want all her friends to meet them."

"Hm-m," said Isabel. "Smart old Hilary. Item for the 'Moon'. Mr. Campbell Stuart, councillor at Boothbay Camp and cousin of Cathalina Van Buskirk, met Cathalina at the dock this morning and

walked to church with her and her friends. Nobody but Cathalina was glad to see him.' ”

“Seems to me,” replied Hilary with a twinkle, “that a lot of interest is developing right here about Mr. Stuart. I’ll have to tell him.”

“If you do!” threatened Isabel. “By the way, why is the camp paper called the *Moon*?”

“Because it comes out at night.”

“Honest?”

“Yes, really. Frances said so.”

“Well how does it happen that you, a preacher’s daughter, are an editor on a Sunday paper?”

“In the first place, it is not a ‘Sunday paper’, except that it is read on Sunday evening; then it isn’t work, just fun, and gives us something to do. We were nearly upset last night by one of the contributions that was handed in just before bedtime. Patty had to call us down twice for giggling after we were in bed. It was the funniest thing!”

“I think that Frances will make a good editor, assistant editor, I mean. She knows everything about camp, and with your bunch right at hand to write poetry and all kinds of things, her part in the paper ought to go. I’m a reporter myself!”

“Remember that all your news will be censored, particularly that item about Campbell.”

After dinner the girls strolled to their cabins for rest hour.

"Wake me up, Hilary," said Lilian, "in time to write my letter home and finish my verses for the *Moon*. Chicken and dressing and gravy and blueberry pie and things are too much for me, and I must have a nap."

"All right. I'm not sleepy. I'm going to read, for I have my letter home written, except adding a little about church. We have enough for the *Moon* already in, and all there is left to do is to pin any more contributions on the pages of the magazine where they belong. Frances is using an old Saturday Evening *Post* and divided it off into the different departments yesterday, leaving vacant pages for later contributions."

"I just wrote home yesterday, but I suppose I'll have to write to somebody as a ticket of admission to supper. I might write to Phil," she added, mischievously glancing at Lilian, "and tell him that Lilian has succumbed to chicken and pie."

Lilian opened a sleepy eye. "Don't, Cathalina. It's so delicious to feel sleepy and if you start fun going I'll get waked up. There comes our councillor. Now you will have to be quiet, at least during rest hour."

"Not a soul shall disturb your slumbers," declared Hilary, and Lilian tucked one little hand under her cheek, turned over on her cot, and was asleep in a jiffy.

When the bell rang that evening after supper at about half past seven, it summoned the camp family to the Sunday evening gathering at the club house. Little girls, big girls and many of the councillors sat upon the floor to listen to the reading of the weekly chronicle of camp life, known as the *Moon*. Chairs around the wall or at one end held the rest of the family, and the doctor, swimming instructor, and other gentlemen whose oversight and assistance were quite necessary to camp comfort and success, usually dropped in to hear the paper read.

There was little that this literary journal would not attempt. Stories, short or continued, articles, editorials, society news, personals, poetry and even an amusing department of questions and answers conducted by one "Mrs. O'Brien". Question and answer were usually written by the same contributor or editor, but that, it is said, is sometimes done in other periodicals. There were some interesting editorials, one expressing welcome to all the campers and particularly to all the new girls and councillors. Another defined a "good sport" and gave some of the wholesome camp ideas on helpfulness, unselfishness, and camp spirit. Reports were given on athletics, with the names of the team captains, and the general program of activities was outlined.

Klondike life and conversation were the subject of a few clever sketches. In verse appeared the

story of the caterpillars which had invaded cabins, and even cots—whether alone or assisted is uncertain—in the early days of camp. Dire pictures were drawn of fuzzy travelers that descended from ceilings and climbed the bridges of noses. Poetic exaggeration also made much of attacks from a mosquito army, under captains, majors, and lieutenants who were undaunted by the taste of insectolatum, citronella, or pennyroyal.

Anything in praise of camp was welcome to the loyal girls, as well as the bright little personals which brought them into kindly or joking notice.

From the junior cabin came a short story by June, which was entitled “Lost or Kidnapped?—A True Story.”

“This is the story of a junior at Merrymeeting Camp and her adventure. She was a very pretty little girl. Everybody liked her, but she had one fault which shall be seen.

“One day the girls went on a hike to First Trott’s. They had a very good time. They ate blueberries, picked flowers in the woods and brought home plenty of Indian pipe for table bouquets. They did not touch them for fear they would turn black, as they have a way of doing.

“All the girls were laughing and talking and having great fun on the way home. When the supper bell rang, everybody went to the dining hall as usual.

But when the girls at Mother Nature's table sat down, Dot was not there. Mother Nature told the head councillor and her face turned white, because Dot is not very old and something might have happened to her.

"So they slipped around and asked the juniors and some of the other girls where they had seen Dot last. Jo remembered seeing her when they were about half way home, but nobody knew where she was. It seemed very serious. Somebody started out at once on the little road. Somebody else went to the pine grove, and several girls began to look all over camp for her. Jo happened to think of looking in the cabin. And there was Dot, reading a book! She hadn't even heard the supper bell!

"Her carelessness had made a great deal of trouble for everybody, but nobody had gotten so far away that they were not easily called back. And everybody was so glad that it had turned out all right that Dot did not even get a scolding."

Lilian had had some trouble with her verses. She was undecided whether to have a fair, round, full or high moon, and spent some time in getting a rhyme for "reflection". Then she hit upon "direction", and in thinking of the somewhat devious way which the Kennebec followed "indirection" occurred to her. This at once finished her last lines,

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and as the subject was appropriate to an evening edition, they were used to close the "Moon".

EVENING IN MAINE.

A song sparrow drops to its nest in the bush;
A swallow in circles is winging;
It is evening in Maine, and where blueberries grow
I hear a sweet yellow-throat singing.

We *greet* you, we *greet* you!" he says to the sky,
Where the rose and the lavender mingle;
We *greet* you, we *greet* you!" he calls, as the birds
Flit high or flit low in the dingle.

"Now where is that nest, little yellow-throat? Say!"
I ask as I listen and wonder;
"O, witchery, witchery," comes the reply,
"I'm hid in the bushes or under."

The shadows grow long on the river and bay,
And darkly the island's reflection
Appears in the water that shimmers and flows
Toward the sea in strange indirection.

But in nest or in cabin or "Little Content",
Enfolded in safety they're sleeping,
While the breezes blow cool on the broad Kennebec
And the night watch a high moon is keeping.

The evening ended with the singing of the old hymns or of more modern sacred songs. One councillor played the accompaniments; another led the singing and announced the selections. Favorite hymns were called for. The girls could remain or retire to their cabins, but many stayed and enjoyed this fitting close to the Sabbath.

CHAPTER X.

A "STUNT NIGHT".

"ON the ringing of the bell," came the announcement at supper, "each klondike must present a 'stunt' at the club house. Twenty minutes now to get up the performance. See who will have the best." The smiling face of the head councillor indicated her confidence in her girls. She knew that they had plenty of interesting ideas in their heads and expected a good entertainment.

"Mercy," said Virgie, "I couldn't think up anything in twenty minutes, let alone get it ready!"

"O, yes we can," said Isabel, "come on. Some of the old girls will know what they do here."

There was hurrying and scurrying to klondikes and much laughter with the thinking and planning.

"Suppose we think up the same thing some other klondike does," suggested Marion, as she walked from supper with Frances. "O, we never do; don't worry," Frances replied.

Patty West had been transferred to Squirrels' Inn in some shifting of councillors, and to her the girls of that klondike rushed. Patty was already racking her brains, she asserted, but so far nothing had occurred to her.

"I tell you what I have, Miss Patty," said Cathalina, "something that Ann Maria said the girls at her school acted out one time and Mother was so amused, for she and her cousins used to do it,—I think it came out in the *St. Nicholas* or something when she was a girl, or maybe she found it in the old magazines at home. Anyway it is just an old poem called "The Ballad of Mary Jane". Of course, we can't learn it, but one of us can read it and the rest can take the parts and act it out, in pantomime.

A brief rehearsal with a quick assembling of costumes and other necessary articles was all that was possible. Miss West was to do the reading, while Cathalina, who was familiar with the poem, was to be stage director, send on the actors at the proper time, cause the pasteboard sun to rise, and do the various duties connected with her position. Other klondikes were in the same state of interesting hurry. Fortunately the ringing of the bell was

delayed a little, but by twenty minutes of eight rows of big and little girls, the little ones in front, sat facing the "stage" of the club house. This was the little room or den at one end of the assembly room. Its walls extended only a short way, to indicate division of a sort, and a curtain could be drawn across if desired. Curtains were usually made from two sheets or two big blankets hastily hemmed to permit a rope to be drawn through, the rope then fastened to hooks or nails.

The audience was composed of those who did not take part in the actual performance presented by their group, or who would not be called on for some time. Clapping of hands indicated some impatience.

"Lights out!" called some one, and the switch for the main room was turned off. As the lights in the little room had not been turned on, all was in total darkness. Flashlights began to be turned on and brought a protest from the stage.

"Turn off your flashes! Don't you know we hadn't time to put up a curtain, and have to fix the stage? Please, girls." These were the little folks from Laugh-a-lot and Little Content whose "stunt" came first.

Presently the stage lights came on disclosing a small child washing dishes, the dishpan on a chair, while June, dressed in a long skirt, with a scarf

pinned around her shoulders and her hair done up high, was preparing a basket.

"Now, little Red Riding-Hood, get your cloak and let me put it on for you. Here, my child, are some nice fruit and a fresh blueberry pie for your grandmother. Go straight there and don't stop to talk to any one on the way!" June's finger was raised impressively.

"All right, Mother," replied Red Riding-Hood in her most sugary tones, while the audience laughed. The mother fastened the red cape and hood that made somebody's little rain coat, kissed her little girl, waved her hand to her as Red Riding-Hood set out, and followed her to the door where she stood, still waving. Then she returned to her rocking chair, picked up some knitting, and settled back with a great air of responsibility. Promptly the lights went out again and a few adjustments were made for the next scene.

When the lights went on the signs of housekeeping had been removed. A placard placed upon the table announced "The Woods". Little Red Riding-Hood came strolling in, swinging her basket and looking at the birds. "O, aren't you pretty? I guess you're a song sparrow. O, what's that?"

From the right of the stage came suddenly a terrible looking animal whose tawny coat looked much like one of the girls' ponchos.

"Gr-rr-rr! Where are you going, little girl? Don't be afraid, I won't hurt you."

"O, I'm just going to take some fruit to my grandmother."

"Where does your grandmother live?"

"Just in a nice little house on the edge of the wood."

The rest of the story proceeded in due order, the children making up the lines as they went along, all of them, of course, being perfectly familiar with the story. The wolf duly found the grandmother in bed and ate her up with much scuffling and growling, putting on her cap and getting into her bed, a pallet on the floor. How innocently did little Red Riding-Hood ask, "What makes your teeth so long and sharp, Grandmother?" And how fiercely did the wolf reply, "All the better to-eat-you-all-up-with!" The scene and drama ended with the timely coming of the woodcutters and the demise of the snarling wolf.

Loud applause greeted the little folks who had thoroughly enjoyed playing the parts and were pleased that the girls liked their efforts. Hilary watching June, whispered to Lilian that she felt like hugging the child. "She looks and acts so like Mother!"

Squirrels' Inn then put on The Ballad of Mary Jane in pantomime. Hilary as Mary Jane looked

the prim school teacher in long dress, stiff shirt waist, high collar. Her hair was in a tight knot. She entered carrying a bag of school books, reading a small volume and passed and repassed at the front of the stage to show how "To teach the village school she walked each morning down the lane," this maid who "could manufacture griddle-cakes and jest in ancient Greek."

Frances Anderson was the "stalwart Benjamin", who leaned on his hoe with open mouth and saw "the beauteous maiden pass at breaking of the dawn". Little did he look like the future pirate who was to burst in and rescue Mary Jane, from her cruel father (Nora) with the "fatal knife", and his rival, Lord Mortimer (Betty). Lilian, attired in the same poncho in which the wolf had appeared, and wearing paper horns, represented the cow from which Mary Jane dramatically rescued Benjamin by means of her umbrella.

A fashion show came next, requiring little stage setting but much dressing. This was given by one of the senior klondikes and was very pretty. Mrs. Astorbilt was first announced and entered in evening gown. She was followed by the sport girl, the business girl, and others for whom costumes could be prepared upon short notice, the Merry-meeting girl closing the parade, and wearing the full costume, with headband, armband, and a dia-

mond upon her sweater. She carried a big volley ball under her arm and held up to view the Merry-meeting trophy cup. All the girls had looked so pretty that each had received hearty applause; but the Merrymeeting girl appealed to camp loyalty and was cheered vociferously with "rah, rah, Merry-meeting!"

An alphabetical romance was given by another cabin. In this the lines were of the alphabet alone, repeated with varying expression, occasional well known abbreviations, as q. e. d., i. e., or U. S. A., included.

The last stunt was called "Five Minutes in Laugh-a-lot." Great curiosity was evident among the audience as in the darkness they could dimly see a figure arranged on the table and covered with something white. "Elaine?" "Operating room?" were suggested, but the stage director ordered silence and the lights were not turned on.

Dim figures stole in with flashlights. "Bz-zz-zz! Bz-zz-zz! Bz-zz-zz!" they sang, moving arms for wings and tiptoeing an insect dance around the table. It was now evident that this was a cot in Laugh-a-lot, the sleeper covered with mosquito netting which was merely a bit of suggestive stage property, having no foundation in fact. The mosquitos hovered around and now and then one would make a dive in her direction. Then hands would

wave wildly and the netting fail of its purpose. All this because little Dorothy Freneau's plump cheeks had exhibited several mosquito bites for a day or two.

Presently the mosquitos joined hands, danced to the front and sang softly a mosquito song, written by the councillor under pressure in about five minutes. At its close they went out still buzzing, while some one from behind the table raised a large flashlight to indicate the coming of the sun. This was the farewell song:

We are hungry old mosquitos
 Looking for a bite;
 Dotty's cheeks are fat and rosy,
 And they suit us quite.
 Bz, bz, bz, bz, And they suit us quite.

But when daylight comes upon us,
 Off we go in haste,
 For they kill poor old mosquitos,
 Make 'em into paste!
 Bz, bz, bz, bz, make 'em into paste!

We are hungry old mosquitos, etc.
 (Last stanza repeated.)

CHAPTER XI.

THE FIRST CANOE TRIP.

"WE want six more for the war canoe," shouted the swimming teacher from the stern of that long, graceful, dark blue vessel.

"Come on, Miss West."

"Throw me a life preserver to sit on,—please—we're going three in this canoe."

"You and I, Frances," said Marion.

"No, you and *I*, Marion," firmly insisted another girl, both Frances and Marion yielding to avoid controversy.

"Four more for the war canoe," from the megaphone again.

"All right, Betty," said Hilary, "you and Cathalina go on in the war canoe,—they need more and it will be easier for you, I believe. Lil and I will take this one by ourselves. Do you want to paddle bow or stern, Lil?"

"I don't care, Hilary."

"You're not quite so husky as I am, and stern will be hard for you if you aren't used to it. I guess you'd better paddle bow."

"Not for that reason, Hilary. Why should you take the hardest place?"

A good-natured squabble followed, in which Hilary won, settled Lilian in the bow and pushed the canoe out from the sands, jumping in at the stern. "I've got that dandy stroke that Mr. Clark showed me. It keeps the canoe going straight forward and you rest your paddle just a second on the edge, so it's easier." As Hilary spoke she gave the shore a final push with her paddle, and sent the canoe gliding smoothly into the deeper water.

"O, isn't this fun? I just adore canoeing!"

"Adoration, exclamation, consummation," murmured Lilian.

"Hesitation, coronation,—there are about a hundred of 'em if you are wanting a rhyme."

One by one the pretty canoes were selected and launched. At first there was apparent confusion as the girls flitted hither and thither, choosing paddles and partners under the general oversight of the athletic director and swimming teacher, but at last the fleet was ready to depart.

The occasion was a picnic at Swan's Island, a large island in Merrymeeting Bay. As this was the first real canoe trip of any length, only the good paddlers and swimmers were permitted to take out the canoes. The rest went in the *Aeolus* and *Truant*, while the *Midget* with a few passengers carried

the lunch. Up to this time there had been instruction, and paddling within certain limits.

Aeolus and Truant let the way. The war canoe followed, with even strokes of the paddles, a great-improvement over the first "ragtime" efforts. Then the other canoes, by ones and twos, swept out from shore to round the point into Merrymeeting Bay.

"Look out, Hilary, don't go out too far. The current is awfully strong out there. Look at Eloise and Helen. My! Are they going to make it? They may have an upset if they are carried down to those rocks."

Eloise, Evelyn and Helen had gone out too far from the Merrymeeting banks and were struggling against both current and tide, which was going out. But they paddled away, while the Midget was watching to see if they needed help, and had just started toward the girls when they drew out of the stronger current and came up to the other boats.

"Why did we start so late and against the tide?" asked Lilian.

"Didn't you hear about the canoes? The men had to go after them this morning. The tide came up so high last night and the girls had not drawn them up high enough. Usually somebody goes down to see if everything is all right, but of course on the night of an unusually high tide it would be forgot-

ten, by the 'irony of fate'. Four canoes were missing."

"Did they find them?"

"Yes; some of the Boothbay folks got them and took them in there."

"Look at our flotilla, Hilary. The English fleet isn't in it with us!"

"It is lovely, isn't it? I just love these blue canoes. But 'bucking the tide' is no joke. This is hard work. However, think of the howl that would have gone up from one and all of us if we had had to give up to the trip!"

"Don't you wish we had Campbell along?"

"I do indeed, and for no sentimental reason either, Miss Lilian."

On they paddled. Soon the launches were far in advance. The distance to the island seemed to increase. Eloise, Helen and Evelyn had caught up with Hilary and Lilian and shouted across occasionally.

"Look at Jenkie with Mr. Clark. Isn't she lucky? See the way he paddles, and look at the way she just dips her oars. Listen, she's calling."

"Come on, girls; this isn't hard."

"O, no, Jenkie, not with Mistah Clahk to do the wuhk!" replied Evelyn.

For the first long pull it promised to be a hard one. But after the launches had reached the island

and delivered passengers and cargo, the Truant returned to pick up girls that were too tired and tow their canoes to port.

The picnic went on as picnics do, but not all picnickers breathe the exhilarating air furnished by the Maine breezes. The girls were soon quite rested, though arms and shoulders might ache a little. Bathing suits and towels had been brought along for a good swim. The lunch was pronounced wonderful and good appetites made quick work of disposing of it. "Seconds" and "Thirds" were permitted for sandwiches and fruit. Some of the girls had brought books or magazines. Others had fancy work. Some looked for new birds or new flowers to add to their number of points. As all the common flowers had been brought in, each new flower counted a point. All the girls had helped gather wood for the fire. Ah, how much better bacon tastes cooked outdoors! Besides the fun, the consciousness of being able to paddle one's own canoe, both literally and figuratively, was the chief result of this picnic, and every trip in this beautiful country made the girls love it more.

The paddle home was almost as hard as that to the island, for a wind came up, blew in their faces, and made the bay choppy. Tide again was against them. In the waves made by the wind and those from passing steamers all the skill of the paddlers

was called into requisition. But the presence of the launches gave confidence to any of the girls who needed it, and the canoes rode the little white-capped waves most prettily.

"Send for Edna, Cathalina, to rub my back," exclaimed Hilary stretched at length on her cot. "Bring on your Sloan's liniment, Absorbine Junior and St. Jacob's oil! Look out, Betty!"—as Betty plumped herself down by Hilary and began to rub a shoulder. "Deal gently, Elizabeth; how are your own arms?"

"There were so many to paddle in the war canoe; we hardly got tired a bit. But I'm just as hungry as if I hadn't eaten three sandwiches and other things in proportion at the island."

"So'm I. Dot has a birthday tonight, so we'll have ice cream and cake. Maybe you will be asked to the birthday table, Hilary."

"No, I don't think so, too many little folks that Dot will want."

"But she is so crazy about June."

"True; but I'm not June. However, we'll all have cake, even if it is not birthday cake."

"The supper bell; O, joyful sound! Are the rest of you lame old ladies going to manage to get down to the dining-room on time?"

Hilary rose with exaggerated stiffness. "I'm going to apply for a position as special guide to take

ventursome tourists through the St. Lawrence rapids in a canoe."

The girls from Squirrels' Inn were a little late in reaching the dining-room, though others were still gathering and the bell for order before grace had not yet rung. Dotty came dancing from the birthday table to show them her birthday bouquet.

"Isn't it lovely? The camp mother made it. See? Every little flower is made of a dee-lish-shus piece of candy in the center, with all colors of paper for petals, and this lacy white paper to hold it all, twisted tinfoil and all! I wish I could have had you big girls at my table too."

"Thank you, Dotty," said Hilary, "it is just as it should be."

The birthday table was especially decorated, with fresh bouquets and extra goodies which had been sent to Dorothy. Packages were piled at Dorothy's place; happy faces surrounded the table. But the supreme moment was when the tables were cleared for the last course and Dot went over to the kitchen for her birthday cake. The girls watched as the candles were lit for her and the cake put into her hands. Slowly and carefully she walked, watching lest her green candles blow out, while the girls sang:

"Happy birthday to you,
Happy birthday to you!

Happy birthday, dear Dorothy,
Happy birthday to you!"

"Dorothy rah! Dorothy rah! Rah-rah, Dorothy!"

"Did you notice her name on the frosting?—Dorothy, in cinnamon drops."

"Yes, Isabel, I certainly did," said Virgie. "I never had a birthday celebration in my life. I wish my birthday came in camp time."

"When does it come?"

"September first! Not even in school time!"

"My, what a pity. You could almost have one."

"I've half a mind to change it, put it in August some time. Why not?" asked Virgie laughing.

"There was a girl that did that once," said Frances. "She went clear through with it, then somebody told."

"What did they do to her?"

"Nothing. They were too kind."

"I suppose she wanted it so awfully. But mercy, I'm having too many kinds of good times that I never dreamed of having a year ago not to be able to stand not having a birthday cake."

"We'll just have a celebration at school for you. Our first feast shall be in your honor."

"I thank you!" and Virgie bowed formally. "Patty said that we have four birthdays on the

same day next week with four separate birthday cakes. Maybe we'll get a taste of one yet, Isabel."

CHAPTER XII.

THE JUNIORS.

JUNE, of the Juniors, was having, in her own words, the "greatest fun of her lifetime." Never had she lived with so many other little girls. Laugh-a-lot had overflowed into "Little Content", a tent next to the shingled cabin, and "Hillside Inn", located where the name indicates. The latter tent had its name conspicuously posted on a board, though the sign artist found that there was not enough room for the last "N" and put up the sign without it.

The youngest of the Juniors were two eight-year-olds, Dorothy Freneau and Josephine Rathmell. Dorothy was short and chubby, with appealing blue eyes and engaging ways. Josephine was taller, thin, with olive complexion and short, fluffy, dark hair. Despite the difference in size and complexion these little girls were called the Twins, because of their years, their birthdays only a week or so apart. "Dot" and "Jo" were great favorites in camp, loved

but not spoiled, for neither was babyish nor selfish and in all the camp sports or trips each wanted to play her part well. As Dotty had taken a special fancy to June both girls were often found in her company.

Among June's other friends was an enterprising child of Isabel's type, who had copied her brothers and who sought June's companionship, largely because she was so different. June, like Hilary, was of the consoling, steady type that makes a good confidante, and this ten-year-old had more than one woe to confide. For June herself camp life was doing a good deal in helping her to overcome her timidity. She learned and tried to practice the definition of a "good sport", which was pinned up in the dining-room:

"Somebody happy, jolly and kind;
If she loses a game,—well, never mind."

There were some things which she found it hard to take pleasantly in this first experience with the companionship of a group. She hated the mischievous tricks that some of them played, but tried to be patient whenever she was the victim. She learned to look in her bed to see if either caterpillar or pebbles were there, and made it over pleasantly whenever it was "made French". One child upset a box of blueberries upon it when it was open to air,

and one morning her suit-case was missing, found later in a distant klondike, where it had been carried "for fun".

"They think that it is really funny," she confided to Hilary. "Several times I've had it upon the tip of my tongue to say as Mother has said to us 'anybody could do that; a smart person wouldn't even think it funny', but I can't do it, since I'm not bringing them up as Mother is us, and then they'd think I was mad. I must be different not to like it. And I did hate it about the sheets. Will the stain come out? Of course that was just an accident."

"Don't worry about that. Mother gave us common sheets and she knows that we can't be as careful in camp life, though there is no sense in being destructive. Just get along as nicely as you can and keep pleasant. We have always had to be careful, for financial reasons, and then there is good sense in having some 'thrift'. I don't imagine that the parents of these girls want them to be as careless with their own and other people's property as a few of them are."

"I'll try to do the best I can, but it seems so stingy not to lend things to the girls, and if I do I don't have them when I need them. The other day when it was so wet Bess had my rubbers and I got my feet wet, and the head councillor met me and said, 'Why, Junie, where are your rubbers?' and I almost cried!"

"That is more serious. I don't know what you will do except to refuse to lend them. Wrap them in a paper and keep them in your trunk if necessary."

"Then they'll say I'm mean."

"Let 'em. They all have or have had the necessary things; let them look after their own. Don't you remember how it has been said again and again, 'Don't lend; don't borrow.' And just yesterday the head councillor said, 'It is *not* selfish to look after your own property.' Those few careless girls make a lot of trouble for her, I guess. Notice all the things that are left in the office or assembly hall."

"I really do like that generous kind that will give anything they have," said June thoughtfully. "Bess would give away her head, I guess; but her rubbers are gone and her sweater and a lot of other things and that is why she borrows. I can't borrow, somehow, so I come to grief if I don't have my own things."

"A lot of the girls just leave everything to their mothers, you know. They haven't lived in a minister's family where things have to be managed and everybody has to take a little responsibility."

"O, Hilary, I forgot. We have to have the doings next Friday or Saturday night. Have you any ideas? Our councillor said for each of us to think

up something if we could and we are to meet after supper tonight to talk it over."

"How about some Mother Goose tableaux, or some charades for the girls to guess?"

"O, yes; that would be fun," said June, clapping her hands. "Will you help me get dressed that night?"

"Yes, I'll help in whatever you get up if your councillor wants me to. I'll see you at supper if I have any more ideas."

The meeting of the committee after supper was a momentous occasion. What they were planning had to be kept a secret from the other girls or the entertainment would lose that element of surprise in which half the fun consists.

"I just can't think of a thing!" declared Dot. "O, yes I can, too,—why I can do something that we girls at school did in a drill one time."

"Good, Dotty," said the councillor, "you can do it by yourself or show one or two of the other girls how to do it with you. Now that is your responsibility. Can we depend upon you to do it?"

"Yes, I'll get it up all myself."

One thought of one thing, another of something else. Hilary was brought in, and another meeting planned for the following morning before games. A long hike was planned for Friday, which would probably tire the girls, and caused a postponement

of the Junior entertainment to Saturday night. But this pleased the Juniors as giving them more time. Dot and Jo were practicing some thing *very* hard to do. June was fixing something of Hilary's to wear. Borrowing for theatricals was considered proper!

Curtains were up for the entertainment this time. The Junior councillors had gathered in the Juniors to dress for their parts. Important as it seemed, some little folks will forget to note the time which will slip away so fast!

"Isn't it nice to have curtains?" said Jo. "When we had Little Red Riding-Hood we had to get things ready in the dark."

The first number on the program was a concert by the world's greatest artists. Madame Galli-Curci appeared first, accompanied by Lilian with the guitar. The small prima donna had refused to sing anything appropriate to her years. "No, sir, I won't sing a child's song. Yes, of course, I know 'em. How could I help it, when we sing them at school? But it has to be a grown-up song or else I won't be Galli-Curci!"

"Madame Shumann-Heink sings 'Holy Night'."

"I wouldn't call that a child's song. Besides it is summer now. What songs do you know, Lilian? I can learn anything in two days."

"Remarkable child!" sighed the councillor who was helping. "Get her anything she wants, Lilian."

Jo folded her arms and stood calmly to wait what would be done. Lilian came to the rescue, and after trying over a number of songs she found that Jo was familiar with the tune of "O Promise Me".

This rendered that night in a high childish voice created quite as much of a sensation as the real prima donna could have desired, particularly in respect to the pronunciation of the words and division of syllables. "You-an-dI and "or-gunn" were especially appreciated by the audience, who were apparently carried away by the effective close, "O, prom-uss me, O, prom-muss me!" Enthusiastic encores brought Jo back several times, but while she handled her train with ease and bowed and smiled with all the graces of the stage, she refused to repeat her effort and had not learned an encore.

After the rest of the artists had appeared, four little girls gave a drill as wooden dolls, while one of the councillors played "Narcissus." This was Dot's idea.

The Mother Goose tableaux were especially pretty. They included Old King Cole, Little Boy Blue and other of the well know classics which were quickly guessed by the audience. Little Bo-peep had her crook and was shading her eyes as she looked for her sheep. Simple Simon was fishing in his mother's pail. The cupboards in the wall which

had been a part of the original farm-house kitchen were just the thing for old Mother Hubbard.

"The last two numbers will be charades," announced Dot. "The first is two words, in one act."

The curtains were drawn aside, revealing one happy little girl curled up on a rug. She was deeply absorbed in a book, and ate candy from a box close at hand. The audience hesitated, whispered, and finally some one called "Little Content". That was the right answer, and the curtains closed. When they were again drawn they disclosed the entire group of Juniors sitting upon the floor and laughing. Having been prepared by the previous charade, the audience at once cried, "Laugh-a-lot! Laugh-a-lot!"

CHAPTER XIII.

CAMP ATHLETICS.

"NET ball."

"Out."

"Come on, now; she serves awfully swift; look out."

"Come on, Jenkie! Put all your strength into it!"

"Hit it up! Hit it up! Keep it going!"

"I served then; one point for us."

"What's the score?"

"Five all."

"Good! Good, Virgie!"

"Now Eight,—your turn."

"Only one assist."

"Come up a little further. You can stand there. Every inch counts."

"My turn to serve?"

"Hit it!"

"O, how could I? A mile above my dear head!"

"What's the matter with this team? That's the third time, Isabel, that you've knocked Pat over, and Betty got hit in the eye."

"Y'see, you ran out of your place and were in my way."

"You dropped your comb, Bertha."

"What's the score?"

"Twelve to seven."

"Whose favor?"

"The Pennacooks'."

"Come on, Kennebecs!"

"Wake up, girls; don't let 'em beat us!"

"Did everybody serve? Begin all over? All right; I don't want to cheat."

"That's the way, keep it up; send it back."

"Out."

It is volley ball, in which two of the six teams are playing. Back and forth flies the big ball. Like the flag, it must not touch the ground. Girlish figures run hither and thither, strike the ball and send it flying over the net to the opposite side, where the performance is repeated. Good spirit prevails. They are playing to win, for the sake of the team and for personal reasons as well; but however eager or disappointed they may feel, no one shows ill will. Pride and camp spirit prevent that. Sometimes it is a little hard to accept the hindrances which the little girls or the less experienced ones offer, but as a rule these are coached and encouraged by the rest of the team. A good play is applauded by both sides.

"Now try it, June. That's it. Put a little more strength into it next time. Hit it hard and send it a little higher. You get another turn. Toss it up and then bang away!"

"Send it to me and I'll hit it over."

June takes her stand, tosses up the ball and hits it. It goes off to the side, but one of the girls who stands there, hits it over the net. Back it comes and over it goes again, sent by a hard blow from Hilary.

"They're coming up fine."

"Thirteen to ten."

"Yes," cried the captain of the Kennebecs. "Where's some wood?" she cries, rapping on her head. Come on, Kennebecs!"

"Thirteen to eleven," announces the referee, as the Kennebecs score another point. The game grows exciting.

"Good work, Lilian."

"Get it, Margaret. O, you weren't quick enough!"

"Be ready."

"Come on, Pennacooks!"

"What's the score?"

"Fourteen to twelve."

"Betty's serve."

The Pennacooks, nerved to greater effort by their higher score and the increasing score of the Ken-

nebecs. made the fifteenth point and won the game. Two games out of three they had thus won, and the Kennebecs generously gave the first cheer for the winning team.

"No hurry, girls," said Lilian, dropping down in the shade. A red-eyed vireo in the bushes had not stopped rooting for both sides during the game, and an olive-sided flycatcher had come out to sit on a wire by one of the tennis courts and inquire which side beat. So Hilary interpreted their remarks, as she pointed them out to the girls.

Hilary, June, Eloise, Lilian and Cathalina were among the defeated Kennebecs, while Isabel, Nora, Betty and Frances were of the victorious Pennacooks. Helen and Marion played with the Ossipees, who were at present playing baseball down on what might be called Merrymeeting Green, near the water front.

"The baseball games aren't over yet," Lilian continued, "and besides they'll have to rest." The girls stretched out or curled up where tall bushes and some trees offered shade.

"Whom do we play in basketball?"

"The Ossipees."

"Well, we must beat them," declared Hilary. "I'll simply pass away if we can't."

"Team work, girls," said Eloise, who was captain.

"My, it's hot this morning in the sun," said Lilian. "Cathalina, I'll beat you in tennis this afternoon, if we can get a court after rest hour."

"All right as to playing. As to beating, we'll see."

"You're the two champions among the Seniors, aren't you?"

"I guess so," replied Lilian.

"Of course you'll get a court, then. And you'll have an audience, too. Which court do you want? We'll see that you get it. I'm terribly thirsty. Let's go over to the club house and get a drink. We can sit on the porch till the girls come. There's always a wonderful breeze there. I suppose your team is at baseball next, Nora?"

"Yes, and we must be going, too,—come on, girls."

This was a busy week in athletics. The July tournaments were on. Tennis was being played off as could be managed about the courts. The schedule was posted in the club house. Lilian and Cathalina were easily the best in tennis and had yet their match to play.

In volley ball, baseball and basketball, the six teams played against each other. Every girl in camp was assigned to a team, though a few were excused for some special reason, and only took part in the games at times. There was not the intense excite-

ment or the temptation to over-strain that there is sometimes in the games between schools; but there was great interest in these active sports and a very human desire to excel.

Volley ball and tennis were played upon courts, which were located on the level ground back of the camp buildings. Beyond the courts stretched a big meadow, partly level, but sloping down to bushes and trees along the back water of the Kennebec. On the other side of courts and meadow were bushes and trees and the charming road or lane which wound along past Sunset Rock, the pine grove and the birches, through Merrymeeting boundaries, to the world of the mainland beyond. Just back of the club house and at the beginning of this little road were the posts and baskets for the basketball games.

That afternoon, though the sun was still hot, the cool Maine breeze stirred the sunny locks of Lilian and Cathalina as the girls met for the final test of skill in tennis. Both girls played well, having played for several years. A few councillors and a number of the girls occupied a bench or two, or found seats on the grass beside the favorite court, the one nearest the lane.

"Now, Lil," said Cathalina, as swinging their racquets they walked toward the court, "you are such a dear, that only I'm afraid of one thing."

"What's that?"

"That you will hate to beat me and won't play your best."

"I thought that all out, Cathalina, and I think that the only fair thing is for each of us to play her level best. And don't you let me beat you because you hate to beat me, or get lazy and do not care!"

"I guess that is the more likely," acknowledged Cathalina, laughing. "I'm a lazy-bones, but I promise to do my best. Beware!"

"Here comes the champs!"

"What's the matter with the champions?"

"Rah, rah, Lil!"

"Rah, rah, Cathie!"

The comparatively small company gathered near the court were more audience than rooters, and applauded impartially both players, though Isabel never failed to cheer some good play by Cathalina, and Virgie shouted at the top of her Western lungs for Lilian.

"Look at Lil. Good work, Lilian; you have a wicked serve!"

"Fifteen—love."

So evenly matched were the girls that most of the games were deuce games. Fourteen were played before Lilian won the first set.

The second set was won by Cathalina, who played

with brilliance and determination. Her most effective play was what the girls cheered as a "slam", almost impossible to return, which she delivered with surprising force for one so slight. This she had learned from Philip. But Lilian, too, had a brother, had been accustomed to playing with Cathalina, and was not as much disturbed by this play as were the more inexperienced girls against whom Cathalina had been playing during these days of tournament.

"Do you read my mind, Lil," asked Cathalina once, when Lilian so quickly reached the particular spot back in the court where she was needed.

"I'm sorry, Cathalina; that was a peach," said Lilian, as one of Cathalina's returns went an inch or so outside.

"Great cut, Lilian," remarked Cathalina, when Lilian's ball went over the net, hit the right spot, and refused to bounce to Cathalina's racquet.

In the third set, excitement rose among the spectators. Endurance was not Cathalina's strong point and she grew tired, but played on apparently as well as ever. She had won four games, Lilian five, and the score of the present game stood forty to thirty in Lilian's favor, when she returned, backhand, a difficult ball from Cathalina. It dropped over the net and Cathalina was not quite quick enough to reach the net from the back of the court. The game

was Lilian's and wild applause proclaimed her winner of the tennis tournament.

Meanwhile in the bushes two deeply interested spectators had arrived by way of the lane. Having been informed by Jo and June, who were playing "jacks" on the club house floor, that Cathalina and Lilian were finishing the tournament, two masculine visitors decided to go to the courts by the back way and remain unseen if possible while watching the progress of the game. June had suggested it, saying that it might "fuss" the girls, since they were not expecting company.

"You're a bright, kind little June-bug, aren't you?" asked Campbell, and June gave him one of her happy smiles, as he strode off with Philip Van Buskirk.

"Well-well! Which will you root for, Philip, sister or best girl?"

"We'll not dare root for anybody if we have to keep out of sight."

"Wise reply. True, and doesn't give you away."

Philip scarcely knew where loyalty demanded his presence. He was proud of his pretty little sister, but every time he looked at the graceful Lilian he fell more deeply in love.

"How about a love set with Lilian, old man?" queried Campbell.

"I'll play one any day," replied the unembarrassed Philip.

"But 'love' means 'nothing'," added Campbell.

"Unfortunately so."

"Good for Cathalina!" exclaimed Campbell, with cousinly regard, at an especially good play. Before this he had found where Hilary was sitting, and did not find the game so engrossing that he could not include Hilary in his line of vision.

Then came the last plays, Lilian's victory, and Philip found himself watching her, as she received congratulations and talked happily with the girls. The boys waited a few moments till most of the crowd were moving off, a few Greycliff girls still around Lilian and Cathalina, then walked around into sight.

"A surprise for you, Cathalina," called Campbell.

Turning, the girls saw Philip and Campbell, and with many exclamations of wonder and pleasure, went to meet them.

"Why, Philip Van Buskirk!" exclaimed Cathalina. "Why didn't you write that you were coming?"

"Didn't know it myself till the last minute, Kitten. Say I was proud of your playing. And Lilian, that was great!"

"Were you back there all the time?"

"Just for the last two games. It was all we could

to to keep still and not join in the rooting, but June warned us not to appear before the games were over."

"When did you arrive, Philip?" asked Hilary.

"This morning. Campbell wrote that this would be a good time to come, I wired him and came. He says that there is to be a picnic up here tomorrow."

"Yes, indeed; we entertain the Boothbay boys."

"Let's sit down right here and talk," suggested Cathalina, moving toward the benches. "Then we can show you around a little."

"I'm afraid we'll have to put that off till tomorrow," said Campbell, "if we go down to camp with the tide. But we can visit a little while." Thus speaking, he waved Hilary to a seat next to Cathalina on a bench and dropped on the grass at her feet.

CHAPTER XIV.

PICNICKERS FROM BOOTHBAY CAMP.

"O, DEAR! It's going to rain today, Eloise, look at the fog!"

"That doesn't mean anything up here, Isabel."

"But it was so cloudy last night, too. If anything happens to spoil the picnic I'll be mad."

"Nothing will," contributed Frances. "If it storms, they'll wait till the storm is over and then come. And if it keeps on raining, we can have fun in the club house and the dining room. But I don't think that it will rain."

"I want to see what happens on a picnic when the boys are here," said Isabel. "When do they come?"

"Right after rest hour, probably. They have to get ready, of course, and the *Aeolus* won't leave here till after dinner."

"Why the *Aeolus*?"

"There are so many boys that the big boat will go after them."

"And what do we do?"

"The program will be announced at breakfast or dinner, I think. Probably there will be some games, different things to make us get acquainted. We are supposed to be the hostesses and will show the boys around the grounds if they want us to, but I imagine that the little boys will want to tear around by themselves. The older boys will pay more attention to us, though. They will all be very polite and appreciative, for their head councillor is quite particular about their manners.

It was almost three o'clock when the boats appeared from Boothbay Camp. The day had cleared, though occasional clouds obscured the afternoon sun. The *Aeolus* came gliding in, full of boys of all sizes, with their councillors. Many of them wore white duck in honor of the occasion. Others were in the usual camp uniform. Standing in or on the *Aeolus*, they hailed Merrymeeting, first with the Boothbay, then with the Merrymeeting yell, and were answered by such girls as happened to be about, for the place of reception was at the club house.

Cathalina was watching for Philip and Campbell, whom she intended to have a delightful time if she could manage it, and proud she was to introduce them to all the interesting girls. Campbell, in turn, introduced the other councillors and other boys, and the picnic was well started. The younger boys and girls had a hare and hounds chase, which was some-

what strenuous for the boys in white duck, but they came out of it in good humor, if a little warm and disheveled.

"They shall have their heart's desire, the dears," thought Cathalina, as she stood apart for a moment and looked at the chatting, laughing company. It was not hard to manage it, for Campbell never got very far from Hilary, and Phil was usually where he could quickly reach Lilian.

"Pardon me, Philip, I want Lilian to take you around a little and show you Marshmallow Point and the pine grove, and, Hilary, will you take Campbell? There is Sunset Rock, too, and the lane. The boys must see all the places we rave about. I'll join you later." Cathalina had seen to it that neither Hilary nor Lilian had planned to take part in any of the games that were arranged for, and had frankly told them why. "I want you to be free to entertain Campbell and Philip. The other girls and I will help with the rest."

Neither Lilian nor Hilary, then, were surprised or embarrassed, and the four strolled first down to Marshmallow Point, properly called Chopp's Point, where they viewed the remains of many a camp fire and sat on the rocks to talk of their schools, the camps, and many other interests both serious and amusing. But when they topped the hill again, Lilian and Philip turned toward the pine grove,

while Hilary and Campbell walked on past the club house to the little road and Sunset Rock. No explanation seemed necessary.

"This is where we find the cranberry plants," Hilary was saying, as she stooped to pick a bit of the vine with an unripe cranberry on it. "Our prettiest blueberries are near Sunset Rock."

"Where is that?" asked Campbell.

"Up this way."

Lilian was just pointing out the pine grove to Philip and they had turned to go there when they looked back to see Hilary and Campbell turning the other way, but looking back to wave friendly hands.

"There are the most beautiful rocks of all in the pine grove, Philip, and along the shore of Merry-meeting Bay."

Down the narrow trail they walked into the grove, Lilian leading. Little blueberry bushes, prickly juniper, bright green moss, sprawling arbor vitæ, tall sweet ferns and other greenery lined the way. Then they reached the thick carpet of pine needles and climbed down a natural stairway, none too regular, made of pine roots padded with moss and brown pine needles.

"This is the way to the swimming cove," said Lilian, pointing to the rocks and the water, which appeared through the trees. "The hunters' cabin is

on in that direction, a short walk. Would you like to go on there?"

"I'd rather sit out on the rocks, I believe, and talk to you while I have the chance," replied Philip quickly, "but wherever you want to go, I'll be glad to tag along."

"I'd rather visit, too, Philip," responded Lilian pleasantly, as she looked about for the best location. "Let's climb back up to my favorite rock. We'll be close at hand if the girls want us, and by ourselves if many of the folks come down to the grove."

Lilian's sweater made a comfortable cushion for both as perched upon the firm old Maine rock they began to talk to each other of their dreams and ambitions. It was just as engrossing as it had been upon their ride from Rochester to Buffalo. While they talked, the bell rang for swimming.

"They are back from the hare and hounds chase and that is the call for swimming; do you want to go, Philip?"

"No; do you?"

"Not a bit; Tell me some more about you pipe organ lessons. Which do you like best, organ or piano? I suppose piano is easier."

"My old organ teacher and I quarrel every once in a while about that. He began with piano, too, and likes it, of course, but says that anybody who gives pipe organ study a fair trial likes it better,

so many more effects and so on, and so much power in the organ. But I hold out for piano still, though I thoroughly enjoy the pipe organ work and do not find it so hard because of having played piano so long. One reads music, you know, and has the fingering of keys and the idea of expression and all."

"Have you had harmony and counterpoint?"

"Yes; have you?"

"No, but I must, because I try to make up little songs and do not know whether the accompaniments are right or not. O, dear, I'll never catch up to you!"

Philip's face showed how little he thought Lilian needed anything more to make her perfect, as he replied, "You are way beyond me, I'm afraid. Let me help you with accompaniment. I'd love to try it! Send me the melody and words and what idea of accompaniment you have, whatever you have written, and I will see if you have broken any of the rules at least, and if you want me to, I'll perhaps suggest some chords that would be good."

"O, that will be wonderful!" Lilian clasped her hands in delight. "But wouldn't it bother you too much? You will be so busy with your own work."

"I'd consider it a privilege."

"Well, you are nice!" But something in Philip's tone made Lilian hurry on to say, "I have always wanted to be a singer, Philip, but Mother says it's

an awful life. She says that I can have the lessons and sing without being a concert singer. But still sometimes I think I would like to try it."

"I'm very fond of music, you know," replied Philip, "but Father needs me in the business, and I like his line, too. I want a regular job. I think every man ought to have one, and as I don't care to be a public performer or a music teacher, I think I'll just keep it for recreation, boring my family with occasional practice and much private enjoyment of my own."

"From what Cathalina says, I judge that your family is never bored."

"They do seem to stand it, but they are a long-suffering lot. And lately," Philip's face sobered, and he twirled the sweet fern that he held, "I've been planning for a musical wife, that is . . . she's pretty young now . . . if I get home from war to ask her."

Lilian's heart tried to turn over, but did not succeed, and as he spoke of the war she looked at him quickly,—“O, Phil!”

"We are bound to get into it, Father thinks, and says that when we do get in I may go, not before. Campbell and I and most of our friends are making our plans accordingly."

Silence for a few moments. Lilian played with a sprig of blueberries, which Philip had picked for

her, and Philip still twirled the bit of sweet fern.

"Say Lilian, would you mind writing to me?"

"I'd love to, Philip."

"Right along, I mean, not just once in a while. I'd like to tell you things, and know what you are doing all the time and where you are."

Philip spoke so earnestly that Lilian almost gasped. Matters were moving rapidly in this new friendship.

"You see you're,—well, you're different. I never met a girl like you. You're so *sweet*, you know!" and Philip put his long brown fingers for just a moment over the little tanned hand on the rock.

Lilian's blue eyes met Phil's dark ones and fell before them, while Philip watched a sweet, serious face surrounded by a bright halo of hair on which the afternoon sun was shining.

"Here come Cathalina and Eloise, Philip," and Lilian waved a hand to the approaching girls.

"It's about time for the supper, Lilian," said Cathalina, "and I thought we'd better look up you folks. Supper is half an hour earlier, you know, and I wasn't sure that you knew it. Whoo-oo, everybody!"

Cathalina raised her voice a little and repeated her announcement of "almost supper-time", that a group of boys and girls down on the cove rocks

might hear her. "Where are Hilary and Campbell, Lilian?"

"They started to walk down the lane to Sunset Rock, to see birds, I guess."

"Yes, to see birds," laughed Cathalina, as she and Eloise ran back along the winding path. "I feel as if I were an entertainment committee, don't you, Elo'?"

"Yes, indeed, with young councillors and boys and girls to meet and introduce. I hope that everybody has been having a good time."

"I know that Phil and Campbell are! And there aren't any lonesome looking youngsters hanging around anyhow. Everybody has had something to do or somebody to talk to."

For the cafeteria supper, the "bread line" was arranged with the purpose of making it easy for the boys and girls to be grouped together while eating their supper. First a girl, then a boy, they filed into the dining-room, past the tables which had been arranged cafeteria fashion, the girls' young councillors serving. Then out by the other door went the long line, carrying their suppers to be eaten upon the green. "Seconds" were permitted, except for ice cream and cake. The quick disappearance of supplies and the merry conversation among the picnickers indicated a good time. After the councillors had had their picnic lunch and the tables

were moved back, music and games occupied the company till time for leave-taking.

"I shall be up tomorrow, if nothing happens," said Philip to the girls. "And if Campbell can get away I'll try to drag him along."

"Yes; 'try to drag me along' is good!" said Campbell. "If he does not select a time when I can get away there will be trouble."

"How soon must you leave, Philip?" asked Cathalina.

"Tomorrow evening. If you have anything to send home, have it ready when I come up. Good-bye, everybody. We have had a wonderful time."

With parting gestures and camp yells, the manly crew boarded their boats and took their departure.

CHAPTER XV.

A SHORE DINNER.

"WHAT is this 'shore dinner', Marion, that I hear the girls talking about?"

"I don't know, Betty; ask Frances."

"O, Frances!"

"Whoo-hoo,—in a minute." Frances presently came in from hanging her bathing suit on the line outside the klondike.

"What is it, Betty?"

"The 'shore dinner', Frances; what is it, and where is it? I have been hearing the girls ask, 'O, are you going to the shore dinner?' but somehow neglected to inquire. Do we go to some place on the shore and have a clam chowder or something?"

"No. The shore dinner is of sea foods, to be sure, but we have it at New Meadows Inn. They take us down to Bath and from there we take the trolley car to the Inn. I went last year and want to go again. I just love their lobster stew!"

"'Love' food, Frances?"

"I'm afraid I do, Miss Patty."

"Can we stop in Bath, too?" continued Betty.

"Yes,—at least they always do let us shop a while."

"Good! I'm going. How about you, Lilian?"

"O, I'm in for everything," laughed Lilian, who was very happy these days. "Will you go, Hilary?"

"Indeed I shall. Do you suppose I'd miss a trip like that? Besides, I'm interested in this Maine country. I never was in New England before. I hope we'll have the trip to Augusta soon."

"Is Augusta the capitol of Maine?"

"Listen to her! Go and ask Virgie. She studied geography last year. Are you going, Cathalina?"

"Of course I am. I am particularly fond of clams and lobster."

"Ugh! clams!" said Betty. "But if you all eat 'em, I will or perish in the attempt."

"Mercy, Betty! Taste 'em and go slow is my motto," said Hilary.

"It is always just as well to have decided whether or not you want to take a trip," suggested Frances. "We'll be asked and have to make a quick decision perhaps. They have to know about the numbers going, of course, both to order the dinner at the Inn and to plan about boats. Will June go, Hilary?"

"She will hate to miss anything, but I'm a little afraid to have her go. It might upset her to eat that stuff when she isn't used to it, and the trolley some-

times makes her sick. I'll talk to her about it. June has lots of sense, but once in a while she takes a spell and will or won't do something. The worm turns, you know."

"Yes, I know the feeling," said Lilian.

"Why, Hilary, at times you have a touch of almost human intelligence," said Frances, grinning broadly. "Get little sister to decide for herself?"

"That is the idea."

As in odd coincidence it often happens, the shore dinner trip was announced at breakfast. The younger girls were advised not to go, as the only attraction was the shore dinner, and that a doubtful pleasure, unless they liked sea foods. All who so desired, however, were permitted to go and were to leave their names at the office at once or within a reasonable time. The dinner would be ordered by telephone and the boats would start in time to catch the twelve o'clock trolley car at Bath.

Hilary had not had time to prepare June's mind to stay at home, but to her relief June came running to her soon after breakfast.

"I'm not going, Hilary. The girls say that they just have old clams and lobster and things like that, and can't eat any ice cream afterwards at Bath because it wouldn't go with the shore dinner, and you know that I can't even eat oysters. Are you going?"

"Yes; is there anything you'd like me to get for you at Bath?"

"We need some more films for the camera, and I need a bathing cap. Mine's all busted up."

"'Torn,' little sister."

"O, Hilary, I heard you say 'bust' the other day."

Hilary laughed, and to change the subject, said, "I suppose you will not object if I bring you something good."

"You can't. Don't you remember what was said at breakfast? Nobody can buy candy or anything to eat this trip, because they couldn't keep from eating it and so it's safer not to buy 'em. See?"

"Sure enough. All right. Have a good time, Junie, and don't try too many wild stunts." This last because it was so astounding to note how June had 'come out' since coming to camp. Timid at first, afraid to get out of her depth in the water, used to considering what would be proper for the minister's little girl to do, conscientious June had now thrown all timidity to the winds, frolicked in the water like a water-sprite since she had learned to swim under instruction, and was daily getting so much of the group spirit that Hilary was sometimes afraid of her going to the other extreme. But the daily exercise and happy times outdoors were giving her much color and the scales were marking

greater gain every time that June was weighed with the rest.

"Think what a dress-up occasion this is, girls," said Lilian, as she dived into her trunk for "real clothes". "Doesn't it seem funny to wear a suit and gloves?"

"Gloves!" exclaimed Cathalina. "*I'm* not going to wear gloves!"

"My, Cathalina, how you've changed!"

"Yes, isn't it funny? But I just love to dress like a camper. I think our costume is fine, too, and *very* becoming."

"Going to wear your sport hat?"

"Yes."

All the way down to Bath the girls in the *Aeolus*, for the numbers were too many for the *Truant*, chatted, sang, or tried to compose verses worthy of the annual prize song. And never did the girls tire of the beautiful river, its eddies through the Burnt Jackets, its rocky banks, its breezes and flying or floating gulls. The trolley ride carried them over a winding way again, up hill and down dell, past typical New England homes in town or country. Presently they found themselves at New Meadows Inn and were ushered into its dining-room.

"O, Cathalina, thank fortune you are with us," whispered Isabel, as she sat down next to Catha-

lina. "You will tell us how to eat the sea food, won't you?"

"If there is anything you do not know about," replied Cathalina smiling. "You've eaten soup?" noticing that the lobster stew was coming.

"Mean thing! Yes we've had soup before!"

The lobster stew proved most popular. "We don't have lobster stew in Dakota," explained Virgie, as she accepted the offer of a second helping.

"It is always offered here," said Frances, "and all right to take it, and some only care for the stew."

In came the clam course. The Western girls looked at each other and Isabel whispered to Virginia, "Shades of clams and 'craw-daddles' in our old creek at home! Now tell us, Cathalina."

In a low tone Cathalina replied, "Open the shell, take the clam off where it is fastened to the shell and hold it by that end with your fingers, dip it in the little cup of broth, then in the melted butter, and eat it."

"Why, they're *good*," said Isabel in surprise, "taste like oysters."

Fried clams, lobsters on a little platter, New England doughnuts and a plate of crisp cookies, pickles, and hot cups of tea or coffee, all came in for a share of praise from these hungry campers. Coffee

was not served at camp, but permitted on these special occasions.

At Bath they divided into parties, a councillor in charge of each, and scattered to the bookstores, the shoe stores, the jeweller's, the drug store, the dry goods stores or the ten cent store on their different errands, till the time agreed upon to meet at the boat. Then again the curving Aeolus took them up the river.

"Swimming meet tomorrow, girls," reminded Hilary, "you going to try, Cathalina?"

"No; I'm not speedy enough to race, though I've learned to swim so much better already. It's a shame that I can't with all the summers I've been at the shore. I'm going to do more of it at school next year. Are you going to enter, Hilary?"

"Yes, you know that I always have to try everything. I'll not win, though. How about you, Virgie?"

"Not I. I never saw water I wanted to swim in till I came to school last year. I love to swim now, but I'm no fish like Izzy."

"There it is again! She calls me a fish now!" Isabel pretended to be offended.

"Which is it, Isabel, the 'crawl' or the 'over-hand'?"

"The 'crawl' this time."

Arrived at camp, the girls saw the Dixie from

Boothbay Camp tied up at the dock, and half way up the hill they met Campbell, who greeted them and walked back to the club house with them.

"Is this the way you reward me for calling upon you?—coming home just as I have to leave!"

"It is not quite that bad, I hope," said Cathalina. "Do you have to hurry off?"

"Before long, I'm afraid, whenever the 'captain' says the word. We brought up some mail and other things."

"Come up on the porch," invited Cathalina.

One of the swings and a few chairs held the party, which included Hilary, Eloise, Cathalina, Betty and Lilian, besides their guests. Then Jo and June came running around, their heads scarcely to the level of the porch floor.

"O, here are the girls. I wonder if they stood the sea food all right. How's the lobster?" inquired June, waving at Hilary and not seeing the young man in the swing.

"Now what do you mean, young lady,—addressing your sister as a lobster? Come right up and apologize!"

"O, Campbell, you're so funny!" The little girls ran up the steps, crossed the porch and June squeezed herself into the swing by Campbell, Hilary moving over.

"Do you like the little boys, Campbell?"

"Yes, Junie, we have great times. I'll tell you about them one of these days. You are coming down to Boothbay on the picnic, aren't you?"

"O, I should say I am!"

"Careful, June," warned Hilary. "Watch your speech."

"Did you ever hear the story of the hunters' cabin?"

"Our little cabin, Campbell?"

"Yes, or thereabouts."

"No; except that hunters often go there during the hunting season. We found the skeleton of a fox up there the other day. Tell us what the story is."

"The story I heard is that there was an old smuggler who had his cabin up here, buried his treasure and was lost in a storm in the harbor. The treasure is still buried here, ah-ha!"

"O, really?"

"Nonsense, Campbell; you're making it up. Somebody would have found it long ago."

"I'm no authority myself, but that is one of the stories that they were telling in camp last night."

"Come up some day, Mr. Stuart, and we'll go up there and dig!" said Jo.

"Where is the place?"

"O, just a little way—up Merrymeeting Bay," sang Lilian. "It's in the pine grove."

"Well, I'm a busy man these days, with a lot of lively kids to look after. Save some of the treasure for me."

"Yes; you may have all we find," generously offered Hilary.

"Don't make such a rash offer, Hilary," said Eloise, "we might really find something. Can't you stay to supper, Mr. Stuart?"

"No, thank you; it's after five o'clock now, the next meal at six, and we must get back to keep our especial division of boys from running off with the place."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE PICNIC TO BOOTHBAY.

"THIS is certainly one wonderful time to me," remarked Virgie to Isabel. "Lobster and clams on Tuesday, either a trip or something going on every minute since, and now this picnic to the boys' island. I have to shake myself sometimes and say 'remember the Maine' or something for fear I'll get spoiled. And G. G. G. G. again next year!"

"Explain your abbreviations; something to do with Greycliff, I suppose."

"Yes; Greycliff Gay, Grand and Glorious. Won't we be in fine trim for the sports there? We girls never half appreciated our privileges there."

"It takes camp life to wake us up, doesn't it?"

"Yes. Then, of course, there are so many other things that you have to do at school."

"A few lessons, for instance."

"And I have too much sense to tire myself out on athletics and not get those lessons. I say to myself every so often 'Virginia Hope, here is your chance to learn something; don't miss it!'"

"Miss Randolph has the right idea. Do you remember how she says to us once in a while 'Take the hard courses, girls. Make your minds work and you will never regret it'?"

"I'm going to have school and a little athletics during the year, and camp in the summer, with lots of it, if I can, after this."

About ten o'clock the girls started for Boothbay. As this was a very popular picnic, held annually nobody but a few councillors remained at home. The boats went down the river with the girls singing as usual, the weather propitious, young hearts gay.

"Shall we have a visit with Campbell, Hilary?" asked June, who had been quite taken with the young man.

Lilian glanced roguishly at Hilary, who had replied soberly to June. "Yes, perhaps so, but I think that he will be quite busy with the entertaining and all."

"Probably he will have a few minutes for you and Hilary, June," said Lilian. June perceived that there was some undercurrent of mischief, but not understanding just what, subsided.

"I wish Philip were here," said Hilary, "don't you, Lilian?"

"Cathalina's the one who would wish so the most," said June, "because he's her brother."

"Can't the rest of us like him too?" asked Hilary, who was rather regretting her blunt retort to Lilian's teasing.

"O, yes; we all couldn't help liking Philip, but sisters, of course, are nearest."

At this the girls smiled and Cathalina said, "I forgot to tell you all about my letter from Philip. I read it in a hurry just before we left. Somebody must have brought up some mail late last night, because I looked just before we went to our klondike and there was nothing for any of us in the box. He wrote that he met Lilian's brother in New York the other day. They just happened to be at lunch at the same place and were eating away without knowing each other, when in walked Judge North, and sat down by Dick, saying that he found he could get away from somewhere after all. Then he spied Philip and Philip saw him. They had met at Rochester, you know. Dick is reading law with his father, isn't he, Lilian?"

"Yes. Our families seem to meet by chance, don't they?"

"Philip said that he is a fine fellow. He took Dick and the Judge out home later for dinner, and Father and the Judge had a great talk over the war, politics, business and everything. I say 'Dick' as if I knew your brother, Lilian, but Philip called him that in the letter and I have heard you speak of him

so for so long. I wouldn't think of addressing him so familiarly."

"We have been trying to call him 'Richard' lately, since he is so grown up, but can't remember to do it."

"'Richard' is prettier,—'Richard North'," commented Cathalina.

"Dick wrote me a little scribble, too," said Lilian. "I was so surprised, because I rarely hear from him. We get news of each other through Mother, of course. He said that next to Mother, Mrs Van Buskirk was the most lovely woman he ever met."

Cathalina looked pleased at this. "O, isn't that nice? and that he is so loyal to his own mother, too."

"You must meet our mother, Cathalina, and it would be nice if they knew each other." Lilian did not mention that she, too, had heard from Philip. She intended to tell both Cathalina and Hilary, who was now her closest friend, but the conversation in the pine grove, and the letters, were just her own now.

"Here we are at Boothbay. I believe that Thorn Island is the name of the boys' island. We are going around to the other dock, aren't we? These are certainly high rocks. What a great old river the Kennebec is! Where's our little Canadian warbler? —O, Betty!"

Betty had been sitting up in front with Marion and Frances, but joined Cathalina as soon as they landed.

The boys and their councillors had made great plans for the entertainment of the girls. The picnic meal was at noon, instead of the later time when it was celebrated at Merrymeeting. With great gallantry the boys waited upon the girls, who enjoyed every minute. The girls had been reminded by their head councillor that morning at breakfast that they should show their appreciation of the courtesies offered at Boothbay, and that they should consider how much easier it always was for the girls to accept attentions than it was for the younger and shy boys to offer them.

In the afternoon the boys played a "left-hand" game of baseball with the girls, then staged a regular game, at which the girls rooted impartially for both teams. There were also some singles and doubles in tennis, which showed the boys' skill. It must be admitted that in athletics the boys are usually ahead. But the girls did not mind being beaten, even when the boys were compelled to use their left hands to throw and catch, and the boys admitted that the girls played well, "for girls".

Not until after the cafeteria dinner did Campbell have time to visit with Hilary, on whom, however, he quite often kept an eye. But when the

games were in progress, he came up and asked her to take a stroll around with him. This singling out of Hilary did not pass unnoticed by the other girls, and Hilary knew that she might come in for a good share of teasing from the Merrymeeting company. But so far there was only good comradeship between Hilary and Campbell, at least, so far as any expression of feeling was concerned. Both were quite young, with some school years before them and life purposes to be worked out.

"O, Campbell," called June as Hilary and Campbell passed a group of the younger boys and girls who were playing a game. "Tell me more about the hunters' cabin before we go, will you?"

"All I know is what I told you the other 'day. Ask Jack here. She wants to hear those smuggler and pirate stories, Jack, that the boys were telling."

"O, could you tell me, Jack?"

Jack was a bright-eyed youngster of about fourteen years, who was usually ashamed to be seen talking to a girl. But in his enforced position as host it was different. Several of the boys and girls immediately sat down upon the big rock near to hear or help tell the story.

"Who told it in the first place, Jack?" asked one of the boys, a little fellow of some nine years.

"A boy last year was telling the first I ever heard about this country. I think he made it up, because

he told us the awfulest yarns all the time about ghosts and pirates and everything; but it was fun to listen, and we all added to it."

"Come on and tell, Jack." June was sitting with her elbows on her knees, her face in her hands, ready to listen in breathless interest.

"All right. You know that cabin up at Merry-meeting doesn't look very old, does it?"

"No. It's made of shingles, isn't it? Seems so silly to try to have a story like that one about it."

"Well, that wasn't the original cabin, according to Tom's story, but built on the same place where the old smuggler's cabin stood. And somewhere around there his treasure is buried, under the cabin, in the cracks of some of the rocks and ledges, or maybe some tree has grown over the place. He was a terrible old fellow, a sort of retired pirate, I guess, and Tom said that the smuggler used to live along the Kennebec and knew that it would be a good place to hide his stores and treasures. So he built this cabin, the old one, I mean. He would be gone for months and then his old boat would come up the Kennebec in the night when the tide was coming this way from the sea. And he'd drag old sacks full of something from the boat to the cabin. He was so fierce looking that everybody was afraid of him and if any boat was on the river when he came along they'd get out of the way or

hide somewhere till he had passed. Once somebody heard horrible groaning from his boat,—”

“O, Jack!” It was getting too vivid for June.

“One time some people with some officers went to see what there was in the cabin, while the old man was away. But they only found the bunks and some food and an old chest with clothes in it.”

“Perhaps he just had food in the sacks and ate it up while he stayed at the cabin,” suggested practical June.

“Yes. Perhaps he wasn’t a pirate. And perhaps he was,” said Jack. “You just listen now. This is what Tom told. One night in a rainstorm a boy that lived on a farm near the river came to shore in a canoe, because he couldn’t get home in the wind and bucking the tide. The waves were just *dashing* every way by the time he got into the Merrymeeting Bay, and pretty soon the canoe went plump, crash, bang, smash, right on the rocks near the cove. But of course the boy could swim and he kept up a minute or two, when he was carried back from the rocks by the water, and finally he crawled up on shore. It was in the days of Indians, and he was afraid of being found by some of them that were not friendly or had had too much fire-water, so he got among the bushes first. Then he saw a light in the cabin, shining through cracks, and crept up, real still, to see if he dared go in. There he

saw the old pirate, or smuggler, whatever he was, taking jewelry out of the chest. It flashed and sparkled and the old man chuckled and chortled, as he ran the jewels through his fingers. They always do that in stories, you know," and Jack laughed.

"This is a fine story," said Jo, while Dot said, "O, I hope he didn't kill the boy!" and snuggled closer to June.

"Then the boy made a little noise, accidentally, stepped on a stick or something, and the old man whisked the things into the chest, caught up his gun, looked to see if his long knife was at his belt and ran out. The boy was so scared that he scrambled up on a ledge and climbed a tree, while the wicked old pirate hunted around, and growled to himself, and said, 'Nobuddy'd better come a-spy-in' on me! Nobuddy'd better come a-spyin' on me! I'll give his bones to the fishes!' "

Jack told this part of the story with relish, while June, Jo and Dot, with the rest of the little girls, kept big eyes on him and in imagination sat in the tree with the boy of long ago.

"Did he catch the boy?"

"No; I guess he thought it must have been a bear or some other animal. He went back into his cabin and barred up the door, and after a while

the boy saw the light go out. It had been shining through the chinks, you know."

"What else?"

"Nothin', except that the boy waited a while and slipped down from the tree and got away from there as soon as he could. He had an awful time getting home through the wood, afraid of meeting a bear, and he didn't have his gun, of course, had lost his canoe and everything in it. By good luck he was on the mainland, and walked home. They used to tramp around so much and so far that I imagine that wasn't much to him. We can hike a good distance ourselves, you know."

"The Indians really used to come to Merrymeeting, you know," said Dot.

"O, yes, and maybe this old smuggler or pirate traded with 'em. But they say that he buried a lot of treasure up there and that his ghost was seen hunting around and whispering in a hollow voice, 'Four from the pine tree, ten from the ledge, Six grey stones at the water's edge!'"

"Whoever made that up," laughed one of the boys, "got up a good one, for there are about a million pine trees more or less, and all the stones along the bay are grey ones, I guess, to say nothing of all the ledges of rock and stone along there!"

“Four from the pine tree,
Ten from the ledge,
Six grey stones
At the water’s edge.”

“I’ll remember that,” said Dot, “when we start digging!”

“It’s a great yarn,” said Jack.

CHAPTER XVII.

A RAINY DAY AND “GOOD SPORTS”.

“It’s been pouring all night and look at it now!” exclaimed Isabel in disgust. “Goodbye our hike to Wiscasset! I had to help get the shutters down in the night, I mean I insisted on helping, because I was awake when the storm came up. The ground will be soaked and we can’t have games either, can’t go out or swim or anything, I suppose.”

“Why can’t we swim?—‘cause we’d get wet?”

Isabel laughed. “That seems to be a good one on me. Yes, thank fortune, we can swim if it does rain, though I suppose if there were a real big storm we wouldn’t.”

“No, because water is a great conductor of elec-

tricity. I heard Lilian and Hilary talking about their trip and Lilian was wondering if 'all those dead fish' they saw somewhere when they were on the boat had been killed by lightning or what had killed them, and then I remember what Father said one time, that fishes always go to the bottom or hide away in a storm. I couldn't be sure, though, let's look it up some time. We haven't had but one thunderstorm and that wasn't worth mentioning."

"It's too cool and nice up here for thunderstorm weather, I guess."

"This looks to me like a steady, all day pour. But they'll have something for us to do, or we can write or read or have fun in the club house."

"We can put on our ponchos and rubbers and go out when we feel like it. I love to be out in the rain."

"Good for you, Isabel. That's the camp spirit. Hurrah, nice old rainy day,—going to have lots of fun."

"The girls can work on the prize songs for one thing. That will come soon. I wonder who will make the best Merrymeeting song."

"Time will tell. Of course Lilian will try her hand at it, and maybe Cathalina."

An indoor field meet was announced for the usual time of games and duly the girls arrived at the dining hall, disposing of ponchos, rain coats and

rubbers as best they could. The chairs had been moved back to leave a large space free for the play. The megaphone announced "This is the annual indoor field meet. Prizes are to be given to the winners in the different contests. These contests will now begin. Will the following girls take their places up on the floor?" Then more fun began than the girls themselves could ever have thought up, so Isabel and Virgie concluded. For it seemed that all the funny contests ever staged in parlors or at picnics were presented in some amusing way. From marshmallow to hurdle races the selections were entertaining to both contestants and audience. The girls who were to take part had been selected beforehand by the athletic director, that little matters like age and size might seem appropriate to the part taken. No one refused to try the feat demanded, and when the councillors were ordered to perform, the merriment grew.

One easy-going, plump little camper created some amusement in the "bean race". "Hurry up," called one of the older girls, "you haven't a single one of your beans carried over yet and everybody else has!"

"I can't help it," returned the little girl placidly, working away quietly at the pile of beans on the floor, "they won't get on my knife."

But patience and perserverance won. Not nerv-

ous about anything, when the beans did "get on her knife", she carried them without spilling to their destined place and was the first to have her bean supply all accounted for.

The "shot-put" was contested by girls and councillors with big balloons, the line men soberly measuring the distances. Grins were measured. A one hundred-yard dash proved to be walking on a string (stretched from one point to another) with stepping off, and watching the string and one's footsteps through a field glass held reversed. But the contest which aroused the most enthusiasm and the wildest excitement was one called a relay race, in which the choice of girls had much to do with the amusement. Four on a side, they stood at opposite walls of the dining hall, and were numbered in order. The plan was simple enough, merely to open a suit-case, which was placed by Number One of each side, don the dress, hat and coat which were found inside, open an umbrella, and walk over to the opposite side. There the clothing would be returned to the suit-case, the umbrella closed, the quick return made and all handed to Number Two, who continued the performance. Dimple Dot, the quiet, dignified Cathalina, cultured Marion, fat May and determined Virgie were of this company. The side through first would win, hence the mad scramble which brought tears to the eyes of the laughing girls.

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Isabel, through the megaphone, gave the same order which she had given for the other races, though perhaps not entirely appropriate here. "Ready,—on your mark—all set—go!"

Cathalina threw dignity to the winds and was especially deft in the whole performance. Little Dot was almost swallowed up in the bungalow apron which did duty as dress, and presented a comical figure as she ran across the floor, stepping on her long draperies, lost in the big hat and coat, and swallowed up in the umbrella. "I guess Cathalina and Marion never hurried like that in their lives before," she gasped, as she sank on the floor after taking off her garb and returning it to the suit-case. She had won the race for her side, for May was not quite through.

The line up for prizes was made a matter of much dignity, as pieces of candy, popcorn crisps or cookies were presented to the winners. Then the girls helped place the tables and chairs in order for the noon meal which was almost ready.

In the afternoon there came more rain and heavier. Puddles stood in the grass. Little streams ran down the paths and joined in larger ones. Water poured from the dining hall roof and beat a tattoo upon the umbrellas of the returning girls, for again entertainment was planned with the big hall as headquarters. This time the good old-

fashioned games were used. And there were some little city girls that had not played "drop the handkerchief"! The "farmer in the dell" was kept going for some time. Musical chairs was played without chairs, girls in a line crooking right and left arms alternately to be grasped when the music stopped by the girls who marched around them. London Bridge was called for, and the question asked by the leaders was, "Which would you rather be, the best swimmer in camp, or the best tennis player?" Girls in the line passing under the bridge wondered why Frances had so many behind her, till their turn came to hear the question. Lilian, Cathalina and some others took their places behind Marion in favor of tennis, but most of the girls desired to excel in swimming, and their long line easily won in the tug of war which followed.

"O, look, girls, the sun!"

While they were absorbed in the games it had stopped raining. The bell by the club house rang and the athletic director announced swimming. "Into your bathing suits," she cried, "and don't forget to gather up your rain coats and other things to take with you!"

"We'll not get wet after all, Izzy," said Virgie, teasing, as they paddled down from their klondikes to the shore through puddles, sand and mud. "Do

you dare me to do a somersault and drive from the high board?"

"What is the use of daring? You'll do it anyhow if you feel like it. I am practicing on the 'crawl' stroke, but it is so easy to drop into the one you are used to using. Doesn't Cathalina look sweet with that pretty cape or cloak to match her suit? Here's for the rolling deep!"—with which Isabel threw herself from the dock into deep water, came up to breathe and shake the water from her rosy face, and made for the float, from which she and Virginia expected to dive. Even the girls who had not been swimmers were growing accustomed to the watery element, gaining both in confidence and ability.

"The bell will ring for a boat ride at four o'clock," was the announcement after the whistle blew for all to come out of the water. "Come now, everybody out! Go up and get thoroughly dry and take sweaters for the trip."

By the time the *Aeolus* had started with its happy company, a fresh breeze and bright sun were already drying off the walks and grass. It seemed a different world. The blue water was dancing and the tide favorable to their ride up Merrymeeting Bay. Past "Marshmallow Point", past the swimming cove, past gulls posing on fishing weirs, the *Aeolus* glided.

"There's the hunters' cabin, Hilary. See how it looks from the bay."

"Not very far from shore, June; suppose the old pirate sank his treasure chest with chain and anchor?"

"What if he had!"

"Six grey stones at the water's edge," repeated Hilary in a sepulchral tone.

"Now Hilary, don't laugh! Honest, don't you think he could have done it?"

"How should I know?"

"O, Hilary, I think you're mean."

"Because I don't add my imagination to yours?"

"Look, girls," said Rhoda as they turned to come back. "There comes the Virginian. We'll get her waves. Don't you just love to go up and down?"

"That is nothing to what we shall do in the deep sea fishing next week," said Marjorie. "They say we go 'way out and anchor, and bob up and down while we pull in the monsters of the deep!"

The Virginia saluted the Aeolus with three long blasts, and Aeolus not to be outdone in courtesy returned the salute through a long tin horn, while the girls called "Rah, rah, Virginian!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

WHO'LL WIN THE PRIZE?

"O, LIL-I-AN!"

"Lilian's out on the point working on a song."

"Words and tune too?"

"I don't know, very likely. She has her guitar with her and told us that she was not to be disturbed 'on pain of death'. But she laughed when she said it, and if you want to see her, go and hunt her up."

"Imagine Lil's going off alone!"

"First she and Cathalina were working on a Merrymeeting song, then we all got at it and evolved one of a sort. O, it's a rouser, *mihi crede!*" and Betty waved both hands, as if directing some Merrymeeting celebration.

"What's 'meehee craydeh'?" asked Virgie.

"'Believe me'; you find it in Cicero, though he did not use it in a slangy way, of course. At least I suppose not, in his famous orations. You ought to take Latin, Virgie. It would be lots of fun now, because you would have it to Patty. Dr. Carver

wouldn't have the beginning Latin classes last year, so Patty took them. *We* had it to Dr. Carver, alas. Here comes Lilian now. Did you get 'lonse' all by yourself, Lil?"

"Yes, and the divine afflatus wouldn't afflate. I guess it works better when you're all round. I thought if anything would bring the Muse it would be the ashes of the camp fires and the thoughts of the Indians that used to meet there. I just had a little idea, but not of a regular Merrymeeting song."

"Did you know that the people on some of the land here first got their deed, or whatever it was, back in 1726?"

"My, they must be old!"

"O, you know what I mean, their ancestors, of course."

"Yes, I've been inquiring about all the legends and stories of this place. This used to be heavily wooded, all over the point, and they used to come down and shoot bears, right where this camp is. Dear me, when you get into New England you are where things have happened!"

"Yes, and in the West, too," reminded loyal Virginia. "We have wild Injun stories there, too, if we haven't any Captain Kidd."

"That is what my verses are about, Captain Kidd. If I finish them I may hand them in, though the prize will be for some regular Merrymeeting song,

in praise of Merrymeeting, you know, something that will go with yells and celebrations. At least that is what I should think would take the prize, what I would give it for if I were on the committee of councillors. But when I get something into my head I have to finish it, or try to."

"I'll help you, Lilian,—I'll make up all the first lines of the couplets and you make the second lines, or whatever lines have to have the rhyme."

"Aren't you generous, Virgie!"

"Who's going to claim the prize if the song you all wrote together wins it?" asked Virginia!"

"We haven't thought that up yet," replied Betty.

Not long after this conversation the songs were called for and a meeting appointed at the club house to try out the songs previous to the awards by the committee. The songs were to be sung before the assembled campers, preferably by the composer, if not, by the young councillor in charge of the proceedings. Another councillor was at the piano. This method was explained at the beginning.

"There was an unusually large number of songs handed in this year, which is very gratifying to the committee, but will make the choice more difficult. As far as possible the author of the verses, or the klondike, if part or all of the girls have learned them, will sing them here tonight. First we shall have the Laugh-a-lot songs."

Most of these were short efforts, but raised a great deal of applause for the composers, though the term author is more appropriate, since the songs were set to popular or familiar tunes. One small author sat on a councillor's lap and was so overcome when her pretty little song was sung that she turned her face away; and at the vociferous applause which followed, she quite hid her head on the protecting shoulder.

One of the Intermediates in Piggly-Wiggly sang all alone, in a gentle voice, two pretty verses about river, bay, island and clouds. Helen, Eloise and the rest of the girls in that senior cabin gave praise to Merrymeeting in a rousing chorus set to Yankee Doodle. Lilian, Cathalina and Betty did the singing for Squirrels' Inn. Lilian had decided not to offer her Captain Kidd verses, declaring that there were too many active things to do at camp to bother about a "masterpiece". Then, too, it would not turn out to be a real Merrymeeting song.

After the singing of the list, a few which were easily recognized as the best were asked for again, and the committee promised as quick a decision as possible. As it turned out, several songs were adopted as Merrymeeting songs, and several prizes were given, one to Squirrels' Inn included.

June, Jo and Dot came around to ask Lilian what had become of the Captain Kidd song.

"Why, where did you ever hear that I was writing one?" she asked.

"I heard you and Hilary talking about it one time," replied June.

"It isn't much."

"We want to hear it any way."

"I'll send it to the *Moon* and if they accept it you shall hear it read there."

"All right. Did you hear any more facts about Captain Kidd?"

Lilian laughed. "I don't know that I have any 'facts' about him, but I find that there is a story about the real Captain Kidd and the Kennebec. It is said that he used to attack boats that came to this trading center, kill off everybody but one, whom he left to help him carry the goods to his hiding place, and then kill him too. Nice old pirate! And they say that the name 'Merrymeeting' applied not only to the five rivers beside the Kennebec that come into Merrymeeting Bay, but to the meeting of the tribes here."

"Then the boys' stories were true, or at least some of them!" said June with satisfaction.

"How can you be glad that such terrible things happened," teased Lilian.

"O, I wouldn't have had 'em happen," explained June carefully, "but if they did happen I want to know about it, and it would be great if we could

find some treasure. Miss Patty, do you know where we could get something to dig with?"

"No, June, and remember, kiddies, that you can't dig up the place,—it isn't yours. And if you ever go to the hunters' cabin, Hilary and some of the big girls must go with you."

"O, dear, then we can't have any fun, I suppose, and if we did find anything it wouldn't belong to us anyway!"

"Finders keepers," suggested Dot.

"That wouldn't be honest, I'm afraid," said June.

"That ethical point can be decided if you ever come across any treasure. I'm sure that you would be amply rewarded! Have fun thinking about it anyhow."

"S'pose we'd find some big red rubies," suggested Jo.

"And di'monds," added Dot.

"And pearls," said June. "Haven't we got the imaginations though? Say, Lilian, *please* read us the verses!"

"O, all right, I had fun, too, writing out the story."

THE MERRYMEETING PIRATE.

In the early days when Captain Kidd
Sailed up the Kennebec,
He had his gold in his vessel's hold
And prize from many a wreck.

When on to Merrymeeting Bay
 The river boats would glide
 In rippling cove or piney grove
 This pirate dark would hide.

Refrain:

O, Captain Kidd, we're glad
 We're glad you're not here now!

The goods that they had brought to trade
 With early pioneer,
 For Indian wild or settler child,
 Was soon to disappear.

Alone he'd board the wave-washed deck,
 The crew could not resist;
 The pirate's glare, their deep despair,
 Could feel through rain or mist!
 O, Captain Kidd, we're glad
 We're glad you're not here now!

With knife and gun and cutlass sharp,
 He'd cut and hack and shoot,
 Just saving one till set of sun,
 To help him carry loot.

But on Brick Island, in the Bay,
 He met his well-earned fate;
 For on his track, when he came back,
 Were men that pirates hate.

O, Captain Kidd, we're glad;
 We're glad you're not here now!

They captured him, and no one knows
Just what those sailors did.
With empty threat the end he met,—
And *exit* Captain Kidd!
His treasure lies somewhere about
Beneath the wrinkled rock,
Or in some cave where wild winds rave
Or screaming sea-birds flock.
O, Captain Kidd, we'll find,
We'll find your treasure-trove!

Of coins a little box or two,
The legend says they found,
But would you wear his jewels rare,
You still must search this ground.
At if at eve his ghost you meet,
Just follow if you dare;
Get spade and pick, or knife and stick,
And dig for treasure there!
O, Captain Kid, we'll find,
We'll find your treasure-trove!

The little girls clapped their hands. "O, Lilian, I think that's great!" Did he really 'meet his fate' on Brick Island?"

"That is what the story says, that he was captured there, and that they really did find some coins around here somewhere."

CHAPTER XIX.

AT THE HUNTER'S CABIN.

"HURRY! Don't let the youngsters see you Campbell. They went out the lane a while ago with 'Mother Nature' and may be back at any time. I think they went after flowers and will not go through the woods to the shore, I'm pretty sure."

"We'll just go right down to the pine grove, and if they see us we can't do it, that's all."

Campbell had come up before supper with several parents and some boys from Boothbay, and had just come in from canoeing with Hilary. They were laughing, as they walked up from the shore and beckoned to Cathalina, Betty and Eloise, who happened to appear. While Campbell unfolded a little plan, they stood in a smiling group, approving the scheme, which developed further under the ideas of more conspirators. Campbell fished in his pocket for something which they all examined with interest. Cathalina thought a moment, and with one word, "wait", sped away toward her cabin. There she searched her trunk for a few minutes and flew back to her companions.

"Just the thing! Don't you want them, Cathalina?"

"No, I happened to bring them because they were in with the rest."

As if strolling, the party moved toward the pine grove, but when they had reached its shelter their demeanor changed and they scurried along the trail, through the trees and over the rocks that lined the shore of Merrymeeting Bay.

"We'll have to be quick," said Campbell, "before my party has to leave."

"Where shall we put it?"

"Look; just the place!"

"I'm afraid they'll think it's fishy."

"Let 'em; they'll soon find out, anyhow."

"O, Campbell, have more imagination."

"They will like it in the end. Let me know how it comes out, girls."

"Indeed we will."

"Be sure to have them start out early tomorrow morning before anybody else does."

As they came back toward the club house, they saw June, Dot and Jo sitting on the steps, talking earnestly and mysteriously, as gestures and looks indicated.

"Hello, June," called Campbell, holding out a hand. "And how are Dot and Jo by this time?"

June sprang to meet him, Dot took his other hand and Jo stood smiling by.

"Where've you been, Mr. Stuart?" asked Dot. "We looked for you after supper."

"Just now we've come from the pine grove and around the rocks," replied Campbell, promptly and truthfully. "Big storm last night, girls, must have beat upon the rocks something fierce! I wonder if it opened up any of the caves where Captain Kidd's treasure is!"

"Campbell!" exclaimed Hilary, laughing.

"We'll go up tomorrow and see," said Jo, entering into the spirit of Campbell's joking. "But we children are not allowed to play around there alone. I don't see why, because there's nobody ever there but camp folks."

"Could the big girls take you? They could get up early for once, couldn't they?"

"Why, Mr. Stuart! You know we get up as early as the boys do, and have a dip and everything, early bird hikes,—"

"Of course you do, Jo, excuse me!"

"We'll prove it," said Cathalina. "We will take you tomorrow morning. Be ready and we'll stop for you,—we'll whistle Campbell's fraternity whistle."

"All right! Goody!" The little girls jumped up and down as small girls sometimes do.

"Hunting treasure!" exclaimed Campbell. "What could be more thrilling?"

"Wear your sweaters, kiddies," Hilary admonished, "it will be cool."

"What time shall we get up?"

"About six o'clock?"

"O, that isn't early enough. That would only give us an hour or so before dip."

"Mercy," said Eloise, "how long do you want?"

"Could you come for us at five or five-thirty, before *anybody* is up, you know?"

"I guess so," said Hilary.

Bright and early the next morning, Cathalina and Hilary whistled softly outside of Laugh-a-lot and were joined by three stealthily moving figures which slipped out of the klondike, permission having been asked the night before.

"Isn't this fun?" said Betty. "What if we really should find something?"

Little birds disturbed in their slumbers twittered a little from the trees as the girls passed. Jo had a spade, which she had secured soon after the conversation with Campbell. June had a trowel, and Dot carried a stout stick, which she had sharpened.

"We had the awfulest time doing anything to get ready last night, because the girls asked what we were doing."

Arrived at the cabin, the little girls peered eagerly

around and the big girls pretended to do so. The hunter's cabin itself was of no particular interest, because of having been explored before. They did not consider taking up the floor to dig or doing anything to injure property that belonged to other people. "O, don't I wish I owned this place," sighed Dot. "I'd dig and dig whenever I needed exercise!"

"There's an awfully old looking pine tree, Dot," said Jo, and not far from that ledge either." To the older girls great amusement, Dot brought forth a ruler, which they had not noticed before.

"They are actually going to measure according to that silly verse," whispered Cathalina.

As if to explain the performance to more critical judgment, June said, "Now I don't suppose that there is anything in that verse, but if we are going to dig at all we may as well have some plan."

"O, what's this?" cried Jo, turning up something near the pine tree from which they were about to measure. The three little girls dropped on their knees as Jo pried up from the ground an old-fashioned brooch set with a small garnet. It was well packed with dirt and took some cleaning and blowing on Jo's part to make it apparent what jewel it contained. It was, however, remarkable, considering how long the pin must have been there if dropped by Captain Kidd, how little spoiled it was by wind

and weather. The little girls looked soberly at each other and began to examine the place.

The next find was made by Dot and was a little silver coin, too worn for any marks of identification to be distinguished. This time the older girls sat down on the ground to examine it. "See how crusty it is with dirt!" exclaimed June excitedly. She was sitting at the foot of one of the larger trees and lifted a little mat of pine needles where the curving root showed a little hollow.

"O, look here, I feel something hard!" Slipping her hand down further, she fished out a queer-looking metal case of some sort, all battered and dingy, encrusted with dirt and rattling with its contents as June held it up. "H'm," said she, I guess it looks old enough for Captain Kidd's time, or maybe the Indians put it there, or some hunter. Beads or pearls, which?"

The girls had quite a time in getting off the cover, which was at one end, but finally it flew off.

"Just beads."

"Probably for Indians."

"Take 'em out and see what's underneath."

"Empty the whole thing out into your lap!"

The last bit of advice was followed, and there came tumbling out of the funny old long case a stringy little mass of beads and jewelry. This they began to disentangle at once.

"Here's a coral necklace."

"Look at this little gold cross with a weeny ruby, but one arm is broken off! Too bad."

A silver buckle of old style, a plain gold pin, a pair of long jet earrings, a delicate gold chain with a tiny heart on it, a small ring set with a real turquoise and another set with a garnet and pearls completed the list. June looked quizzically at Cathalina. "Seems to me I've seen that gold chain and heart before. I bet you and Campbell put this box here last night!"

"What makes you think so?" parried Cathalina.

"I just do. Didn't you wear that chain at our first party?"

"How could I if it were here?"

"O, but it wasn't here. You dear old Cathalina, you didn't want us to be disappointed, did you?" It was like June to take it so, instead of feeling that the girls and Campbell wanted to make fun of the little girls.

Dot and Jo were looking a bit rueful and Dot remarked dolefully, "Of course we can't keep 'em, then," and turned the turquoise ring about on her finger.

"Of course you can keep them if you like them. We thought that you'd like to find something, and of course you can't dig around much to spoil the looks of things here."

"Well," said philosophical June, "of course we'd like to find some real Captain Kidd stuff, but after all, Dot, it's better to have these pretty things than to dig around and not find a thing."

"That's so," replied Dot looking more cheerful. "Let's divide them, if Cathalina really meant them for us. Why don't you want them, Cathalina?"

"I never wear them. O, I did put on that necklace once lately. I had forgotten it. Mother gave me quite a lot of old jewelry one day, saying that no one ever wore the pieces and that I might keep them or give them away, as I liked. I happened to have it with me and thought of it when Campbell said 'let's fix up something for the girls to find'. The turquoise ring I had when I was about Dot's age, and I thought of that for her, of the garnet one for Jo, and of the little chain for June. But divide them any way you like.

"My, you're good to us Cathalina," said Dot.

The children had quite a lively time while dividing the "treasure". They decided to keep it a secret about the digging, and asked the older girls not to tell. "We didn't put that coin there, though," said Hilary.

"That's so!" exclaimed Dot. "We did find something, then!"

CHAPTER XX.

AS TOLD BY BETTY.

DEAREST POLLY AND JULIET:

You can't imagine how we girls enjoyed your combination letter in reply to the little card we sent,—just to tell you where we were and to let you know that we are thinking of you. It is fine, Polly, that Juliet is with you on the ranch this summer. Maybe she will look like more than your "shadow" by the time she leaves the ranch. In my "mind's eye" I see you both tearing around on horseback,—or is it bronco-back?

We appreciate all the more your writing to us because you have been so busy with the summer's work. We all went out on the rocks, Patty, too, and sat there eating blueberries while Cathalina read the letter to us. You have already received her letter, of course. She said that she tried to give you a general idea of the camp and told you about some of the good times we've had, and they have been going on steadily since. It would take pages and pages to tell about them.

The August tournaments are on now. We have been playing off tennis and trying hard to have our team win in the other games. Since Cathalina wrote, we have had some fine trips, too. One was our second trip to Popham Beach for surf bathing. That was the real salt water, you know, sandy beach and everything. The water was cold, but you feel so fine, all in a glow afterwards. Those big waves,—I just love them. There is a place to buy ice-cream and other things, and we are always hungry, you know. We go to a house not far from the beach to change to bathing suits, and after the swim we have a hot lunch on the shore, hot beans and bacon or “wieners” and sandwiches, pickles, cake, different good things, and my, how we eat! This last time it took a good while to eat our lunch and then we shopped a little in Bay Point, which is the name of the little town, and all this made us late starting home. It is a three hours’ ride, anyway, and you may imagine that we were late getting home, and hungry again. We had to stop at Bath for errands and to pick up a visitor who was coming up to camp, then had to “buck tide” all the way up. The smaller boat got in while the folks were eating supper, but our big boat was heavier, with more passengers, couldn’t get through the Burnt Jackets and went around the longer way. The folks saw us turn around and go back and were worried,

I guess, for one of the other boats came to meet us, but developed engine trouble and we beat it home! The girls pretended to be starving, and went up the rise to the dining-room saying, "We want food! We want food!" and two or three of the councillors who came out to meet us answered, "We want our children! We want our children!"

As we have been having good weather right along, it was decided to have the deep sea fishing trip this week, too. We go to the same beach, but go out to sea and fish. Last year they had rough weather and some of the girls had a hard time to stand it, after they anchored and were tossed around and up and down and back and forth! But this time it wasn't rough at all. O, we rode some nice big waves, but that was fun. Our two boats caught forty fish. We had so much fun through it all. Evelyn Calvert caught the biggest fish of all and was so excited and even scared over it. Eloise and Helen are a "perfect scream" when they are together, say the funniest things with the most sober faces, and keep us laughing half the time. We have met so many interesting girls up here, too, besides the Greycliffers. Frances Anderson is a peach and Marion Thurman is a dear,—but Cathalina said that she told you all about Squirrels' Inn. Virgie is having a great time with Isabel, who keeps her down somewhat. Can you imagine Isabel's keeping any-

body down? Virginia is all right, but after being bottled up so long she sometimes wants to try all sorts of things. I heard Isabel telling her the other day that she wanted to get back to school alive anyhow.

O, I must tell you about the scare we had. You know how noises do sound in the night. At first whenever a squirrel would run over the roof somebody would squeal, but we are used to that now. Once a mouse ran around the big room, and must have been scared to death, I judge, when we all jumped up on our cots and shrieked. Anyway we did not see him again.

This time it was moonlight and we were all asleep, our shutters opened as usual, the big doors "bolted and barred". The windows are all screened and rather high from the ground. Cathalina sleeps just across from me, and when I suddenly woke up that night I saw her sitting up in bed, rubbing her eyes and looking startled. "What was that?" she whispered over to me. We listened and heard the bushes rustle and crackle and it seemed as if a stone rolled down the bank. Then we imagined that someone was coming up the steps in front. By this time nearly all the girls were sitting up to listen, and Patty woke up too.

"What are you all awake for, girls?" she asked.

"Just listen," several of us whispered, and put

our fingers on our lips to warn her. Just then came a terrible bump on the door. Marion screamed and ducked down in bed. Cathalina flew over to Lilian, whose cot is not far from hers. Patty jumped up as if she were shot, and went toward the door, putting on her bath robe, while Hilary picked up a baseball bat that was standing in a corner and joined Patty. She tried to laugh, and said, "I will protect you or perish, Miss West," but I'm sure her teeth were chattering.

"Sh-sh," said Patty.

Next we all flew to our windows and looked out. They're screened tight, so we couldn't lean out. Not a thing could we see but moonlight on the bushes and trees.

"Open the back door and look, girls," said somebody. "Not on your life," said Nora.

"Nobody could get up there."

"Yes they could; they could climb!"

"Somebody go to the club house!"

"Yes, and get murdered on the way!"

"I wonder if it could be a bear."

"No bears here now."

"Get your revolver, Hilary."

"Haven't got any."

"Sh-sh. I just said that for the benefit of the burglar."

"Could it be the boys trying to scare us?"

"They wouldn't do such a thing, besides they couldn't get up here without being found out."

By this time it began to be a lark to some of us, and we got over being so frightened. Then there was a rubbing sound against the klondike. Patty was puzzled, we could see, but she said, "I think that it must be some animal, probably a loose horse. Then she told us to keep still so she could listen, and we all got scared again. Lilian whispered that she heard breathing, and when Nora said, "Course you do, it's me," everybody laughed.

Patty began to get tired of our nonsense and said, "Girls! No burglar would try to get in here after all that shrieking! It is a wonder that the people at the club house haven't been roused before this!"

Just then somebody did run up the steps and knocked on the door. A most welcome voice called, "What's the matter, girls?" Patty unfastened the door in a jiffy and there were the councillor and one of the girls from the nearest cabin. They had heard the commotion and finally decided to come over. Patty told them, and the girls just stood aside and pointed at two stray cows that by this time were some little distance away, over where the bushes grow thickly at the top of the bank.

We all settled down then and went to sleep after a while, but we nearly collapsed with merriment the

next morning going over it again,—the way the girls looked and what they said and how ridiculous it all was! One would remember one thing that was said and another something else, till Patty said that we might “use the occurrence” in a “stunt” if we chose. Maybe we shall, but there was another cow episode that was a little more wildly exciting, perhaps, when we were on a six point hike from North Bath, through the woods on the mainland opposite. One of the girls threw some sticks as they passed some cows, and the cows chased them. They were not “dumb driven cattle,” by any means! Even Virgie, who is used to cows, climbed a tree, and we have teased Isabel nearly to death for getting on a big rock and asking Virgie in anguished tones if cows could climb rocks. Virgie said, “Yes,” as she was climbing the tree, and Isabel did not know what to do; but the cows went past. They were fierce looking things, had long horns. Now you would have lassoed a few, wouldn’t you?

There is so much to tell that it would take volumes if I tried to write it. But when we get back to school we can have a good old visit and tell all we know and some that we don’t know, as usual. I do hope that you both will be there. You did not say a word about school in your letter. However, the ranch doings were of more interest to us all

just now. All the girls send heaps of love to you both. We hope to see you at the opening of school.

Lovingly,

BETTY.

CHAPTER XXI.

A FIVE-POINT HIKE.

"THERE goes the bell. Are you going, Hilary?"

"I don't know, Frances. I'm awfully sleepy, and it is hot this afternoon."

"Good breeze, though."

"Do we get points for this hike?"

"Five miles, five points."

"All right, Frances, I'll try to get up a little energy and go! How about you, Lilian?"

"Why you know I twisted my ankle a little this morning in games and it doesn't feel right yet. I've been rubbing it, but I do not believe that a five-mile walk would help it any."

"O, no; you ought to rest it today. Did you see the nurse? No, it did not swell or anything. I just gave it a wrench, I guess. It will be all right."

"I'm not going either," said Cathalina. "I will go down to the house and get you some liniment, if you like."

Marion, Frances and Hilary proved to be the only Squirrels' Inn representatives on this hike, for

Betty decided to stay with Lilian and Cathalina, and Nora had other plans. The three hikers donned their elkskin hiking shoes, took their smallest purses and started with the rest out the road toward First Trott's. It was too early in the afternoon for much shade, though the narrow road wound between ferns and woods as ever. The sun had baked the ruts hard, too, and came down hot upon youthful shoulders. But why get points if one does not earn them by effort?

"I'm going to see how soon I can walk it," said one girl, striding past, though for the most part the girls were going in groups, some strolling, some walking briskly or sturdily along.

"Goodbye, then," said Frances, "there isn't any hurry this time, with such a short hike and time to rest there. I'd rather take it more slowly and eat a few blueberries or stop in the shade occasionally, wouldn't you, Hilary?"

"Indeed I would. But I didn't bring my field glasses. I thought that there would be few birds flying while it is so hot, and we'll be coming home for supper before it cools off very much."

"How far is to to Second Trott's?" asked Marion.

"Opinions differ, but on our hikes it is always considered a five-mile hike there and back, or to the school-house, which is not far beyond. What

sort of a performance, by the way, are they going to have there? Do either of you know what we are going to do?"

"Why, yes, Frances," replied Hilary. "They said it was a lawn fete, or something of the sort, and that we could buy ice cream and candy and lemonade, maybe other things."

"I wonder if they will not let the boys come up, too," said Marion.

"I wouldn't be surprised to see them," Frances assented.

Hilary had not thought of that, but her mind immediately visualized a certain young councillor whom she would be very glad to see.

Soon they reached the turn in the road after Second Trott's. With a gentle rise it wound around some fine old rocks, on whose top grew great pine trees. In these a little flock of chickadees was turning somersaults. Further on was a bit of backwater, near which grew some water plants, and a line of brilliant cardinal flowers. Climbing along steep and dusty hill, the girls found themselves in sight of the white school house, known as Chopp's. There, indeed, was a group of Boothbay boys, some just arriving as the Merrymeeting campers came up. They had come by a different way, upstream from Boothbay Camp, then docking at the mainland, on

the opposite side of the back water, which makes a peninsula out of Merrymeeting.

The first thing was to cool off a little and enjoy ice cream and other goodies afforded by the ladies who served the refreshments. Home-made cake, candy and nuts proved popular. The lemonade, alas, was all gone before the Merrymeeting girls arrived, but there was plenty of cool water. Campbell was looking for Hilary, afraid that perhaps she was not coming, and walked to meet the girls, as they approached. "Where's Cathalina?" he asked.

"She and Betty stayed with Lilian. Lil twisted her ankle this morning, not much, but enough to keep her from any long hike. I promised to bring her some sweets."

"Well, come on, girls, before everything is gone, and I'll see that you get some ice cream and cake."

Campbell beckoned to another councillor and they waited upon the girls, bringing the cooling water, which tasted so good after the hot walk, and the more substantial refreshments, as they could be waited upon.

"O, you don't know how good this is!" exclaimed Hilary.

"Yes I do, for I thought I never was so thirsty in my life and we did not have much of a walk. But Bob and I came up in a canoe and it was hot on the water."

"I always get sunburned till I peel off, on a canoe trip," said Frances.

"That remark is somewhat ambiguous, Frances."

"All right, Marion, I'll change it. On a canoe trip I always get sunburned till I peel off later. My nose, arms and shoulders will have an entirely different epidermis when I return from the wilds of Maine. My, don't I hate to think of it!"

"I would," said Hilary, "if I were not going to such a wonderful school. It is on the water, too, and while we do not have time for the good times of a camp, not straight along, you know, we do some very interesting things and I am going to try to get more of them in the next year. My schedule will not be so full, and while I want to get in all the studying that I can, and there are so many fine courses to take, I suppose it is silly not to get some of the *different* things that you never can get anywhere out of school."

"Are you going to keep on at Greycliff instead of going to a regular college?" asked Campbell.

"I am for this year, but I am not sure about the next. When I started to Greycliff I expected to finish two years there instead of high school. But you know they have two years of college work, too, and most of our little crowd decided last year to return another year anyway."

"It isn't such a bad idea to miss the freshman

year at college anyhow," said Campbell. "It is the hardest year."

"Yes, and one will miss a lot of the hazing, but girls don't make it as bad as the boys do, and I suppose I'll get to be as fond of college or university life as I am of dear old Greycliff, though that does not seem possible."

"What sort of a school are you going to, one of the girls' colleges or a co-educational school?"

"That isn't decided yet. It depends on what Father thinks about it. He and Mother are still discussing it, and Mother says that Father has to decide the matter. I have such wonderful parents that I am sure what they decide will be just the thing."

By this time the other councillor from Boothbay, with Frances and Marion, had strolled out to where some games had been started, leaving Campbell and Hilary still talking over their ice cream.

"I'm going West on a short trip with Uncle Mart at Christmas time, Hilary. Would you mind if I stopped off to see you, or will you be at home?"

"Would I *mind!*" exclaimed Hilary. "Why, Campbell, I'd love to have you come. No, after having been away nearly all summer, I shall plan to stay with the folks at Christmas time. And Father and Mother have been just aching to have you and Philip and some of the rest come to be

entertained at our house,—ever since they have listened to my description of the Stuarts and Van Buskirks, and all the sisters, cousins and aunts that you have. We have so few near relatives.”

Campbell was wishing that Hilary would not be quite so general in her expressions of interest in the Van Buskirks and Stuarts, but could not but be satisfied with the heartiness of her response to his suggestion of a visit at Christmas time. Hilary was no coquette, but it was a source of her attraction, so far as Campbell was concerned, that he could trust her sincerity. The fact that Hilary was interested in real living more than many of the city girls whom Campbell knew was another source of interest to him. “Hilary talks sense,” Campbell had remarked to Philip. “She likes a good time as well as anybody, but that isn’t the main thing in life, as she sees it. It’s some fun to send candy or flowers to a girl who will really appreciate it, and not pat herself on the back and think ‘How sweet I must be to have the boys sending me flowers!’ ” And Philip had thought of another girl of the same true sort to whose winning he intended to devote himself.

“Well, I’ll have it to look forward to, then,” said Campbell, in reply to Hilary’s cordiality. “I shall write to find out if it is all right when the time comes. You don’t mind not playing the games out

there," he continued, waving his hand toward the boys and girls.

"No; I much prefer this," acknowledged Hilary demurely.

"I have a fine plan, at least it will be fine for me if you consent, and I came up in a canoe on purpose. Do you suppose you can get permission to go back with me?"

"Why I believe I can." For what were points for hiking to Hilary when an invitation from Campbell was in question?

Patty was not there, but Hilary asked the camp mother if Mr. Stuart might paddle her home, and permission was granted. Smiling, Hilary ran back to Campbell, stopping a moment to tell Frances of her change of plan. "She asked me if you would upset the canoe," Hilary reported to Campbell, as they started off briskly, "and I told her that you could do anything!"

"That was rather a doubtful reply," remarked Campbell.

"She understood all right, but looked at me so soberly, just as if she were going to refuse, asked me if you were Cathalina's cousin and all sorts of things that she knew perfectly well, just to make me think that perhaps I could not go, but I knew that she was doing it for fun."

"Did the girls mind your going?"

"No. Frances was lovely, and said that she would tell Marion."

Hatless and brown from the sun, a typical summer girl and boy, Hilary and Campbell swung along the way to the shore where the canoe waited. It was pleasant to be taken care of, Hilary thought, as Campbell did the launching and most of the paddling, and told Hilary to "fold her hands and look pretty".

"How could I!" she exclaimed with a laugh.

"You don't have to try," returned Campbell with an approving glance. But this was the nearest approach to sentiment that he made that summer. "Where shall we go? Into the bay and up the Androscoggin a little way?"

"That will be fine," Hilary assented. "We still have an hour or so, haven't we? We were only there about half an hour, I think. I didn't wear my watch, though."

"I'll get you home in time," declared Campbell. "Let's forget the time o' day and just have a good old talk." This they proceeded to do, but after all managed to arrive at Merrymeeting dock in time for Campbell to join the Boothbay flotilla, which started from the other shore for Boothbay Camp.

"Goodbye, Campbell, I have had such a good time."

"So have I, and I hope we can have a few more visits before camp closes."

The bell was ringing for swimming, for which there was just time enough before supper. Hilary met the girls coming down to the shore as she went up to get her bathing suit.

"Why from this direction?" asked Marjorie. "The last I saw of you, you were eating ice cream at the school-house."

"O, I came home in an aeroplane," joked Hilary.

"She was paddled home," explained Jean to Marjorie, as they ran past Hilary.

Hilary found some of the girls of Squirrels' Inn just getting ready for the swim, and they all went in together. "This," said Frances, as they swam out to the float, "is the end of a perfect day for you, isn't it, Hilary?"

"I think I'll have to acknowledge it," said Hilary, turning over to float a while, "but we are going to work a while on our canoe after supper, aren't we?"

"Yes, unless something else turns up."

Much mystery was in the air relative to the decorating of canoes. Each group of girls contesting had one in some sequestered spot and was decking it for the annual canoe pageant. Prizes were to be given for the prettiest and for the most original idea. Crepe paper had been brought up in quantities and in all colors from Bath. Wire and string were in

great demand. Some of the girls were working hard on designs and decorations. The little folks had great ambitions, but depended more on their councillors to work out ideas. The older girls could do their own decorating, with assistance at the last from the long-suffering man power of the camp; for not a tack or wire was to be hammered into these graceful and expensive canoes.

"I know what you're going to have," asserted Virgie to June.

"No you don't; you just hope I'm going to tell you!"

"Yes I do, I guessed."

"Who told you that you were right?"

"Nobody."

"O, you just think that you can get me to tell you, Miss Virgie, but we are going to have the funniest and best of all, I'm sure. Just wait till tomorrow night!"

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CANOE PAGEANT.

LILIAN was trying on Eloise's bathing suit of red and black, and wrapping the cloak of the same colors about her, she folded her arms and repeated, "Fifteen men on a dead man's chest!"

"Yo! ho! ho! and a bottle of rum! Wait till I get on my fierce beard and mustache and you'll see what a pirate can look like!"

"What do you think of this?" asked Hilary, as she tried on a fiery looking turban made of silk middy ties. "And look at the flag Patty has made for us. Isn't that a scary skull and cross-bones?"

"Yes indeed! Patty's a peach,—O, 'fifteen men on a dead man's chest. Yo, ho, ho!—and a bottle of rum!' "

"Aren't you a case, Lilian North!" exclaimed Cathalina, who was resting from her recent labors on the canoe, and lay on her cot watching the girls.

"O, Captain Kidd, we're glad, we're glad you aren't here now!" hummed Lilian.

"Are you going to sing that?" asked Cathalina.

"O, no; if I have time I'll make up something like, 'I'm Captain Kidd, the pirate bold, who sails the Kennebec,—'"

"My right arm helps 'em walk the plank," added Hilary.

"And little do I reckon!" finished Cathalina.

"Hurrah!" cried Lilian. "Poetry made while you wait by Squirrels' Inn and company. Give me another verse and I'll take my guitar, neatly concealed by evergreen, and make up a tune on two or three notes as we go."

"A verse is a line, Lilian."

"Very well, a stanza, then. O bold and true, my pirate crew,—"

"And if they're not, what then?" asked Frances.

"Thanks, Frances, that will make the next line. Ah, Davy Jones will get their bones,—mm."

"Goodbye, ye merry men! Tra-la, another poem for our collection of masterpieces! Say it all, Hilary," continued Cathalina.

Hilary, "struck an attitude" and with some prompting, repeated their latest effort:

"I'm Captain Kidd, the pirate bold,
Who sails the Kennebec;
My right arm helps 'em walk the plank
And little do I reckon!

O, bold and true my pirate crew,
And if they're not, what then?
'Tis Davy Jones will get their bones!
Goodbye, my merry men!"

Most of the day had been spent by the campers upon the canoes, and in some cases upon their own costumes, when these were necessary to carry out the idea. It had been planned to use that witching time when the sky was still beautiful from the sunset and yet the blue mist of evening with moon and stars was just appearing in the east. It did not seem best to plan for lighting up the canoes. While there was plenty of water, it is true, to put out any blaze that might occur, the canoes might not be in the most favorable position for an upset. The most beautiful light was offered by Nature herself.

The girls had worked hard. Not a canoe but was prettily dressed. As each one was brought from its hidden retreat to be launched, exclamations were heard on all sides. Admiration and surprise were mingled. It was a matter of honor not to intrude upon the secrecy of those engaged upon the work, but in some way the news about a few had leaked out. However, only the sight of the canoes themselves could give the full effect. The athletic director and the other councillors knew the plans for the girls and arranged the order of launching. With

the heavier canoes, some of which had a light framework wired and resting on top of the canoes, the girls had to have some help. All those who were not needed to paddle or pose stood upon the shore and dock as audience and judges.

In the graceful fleet which passed the "reviewing stand" there was the canoe decked in ferns and evergreen, with a few paper birds wired to poise in flight above; one in yellow and white, with yellow roses and butterflies; another trimmed in white cotton, so put on as to imitate snow and ice, a diamond dust covering all, two long-bearded, white-garbed paddlers guiding the canoe, and a big white polar bear, sitting in the center and carrying a banner marked The Northland. The war canoe was given to some of the Juniors, who wanted to represent the Old Woman who lived in a Shoe, and had to have several children to overflow the big shoe of wired paper. One of the councillors in white cap and kerchief took the part of the Old Woman, and the children in quaint costumes, with ruffles of crepe paper, roused much enthusiasm among the spectators.

This canoe won the prize for being the prettiest, and some of the judges wanted to award it the prize for the most clever idea. But that finally went to the three girls of Squirrels' Inn, whose canoe was decked to represent a pirate ship. A furled sail

was put up in the bow, to which the pirate flag was attached. Frances as Captain Kidd, with Lilian and Hilary in costume, repeated in hoarse voices, as they passed the judges, the couplet which Lilian had been chanting, with "Yo, ho, ho!—and a bottle of rum!" Then all in deep voices sang the new Captain Kidd stanzas to the tune of *Yankee Doodle*, rendered slowly, while Lilian twanged an accompaniment on the guitar. Burnt cork mustaches of fierce upward curve, made all this more impressive.

As the light grew more dim, the girls in the canoe marked the Northland, turned on several flashlights, which lit up effectively the diamond dust, and those in the pirate ship turned on several large ones, which they had covered with their red paper. A few other lights flashed out in different canoes as they all circled prettily in the water and came into port once more.

"There, that's over," said Hilary, as with the pirate flag over one shoulder and Lilian's guitar over the other, she entered the klondike. "Patty will certainly have to get up our entertainment for stunt night. We have only about a week to get ready now, and with the Wiscasset hike, the canoe trip to Brunswick, and the White Mountain trip, I can't see where we get up anything, do you Frances?"

"No, I don't. However, not all the girls will

go on the White Mountain trip, you know. Perhaps we can have some little easy part to do that we can get quickly, or if we can think it up before we go, we can have it in mind, you know."

"There come Patty and the girls now; let's ask them."

"O, Miss Patty, how about our having stunt night next week?"

"I have been thinking about that, girls. Who has an idea?"

Nobody seemed to have one.

"They have had everything there is to have, I'm afraid," said Lilian.

"Well, let me relieve your minds, then," said Patricia. "I had an idea several days ago and have been trying to get it a little more clearly outlined." At this point Cathalina gave a meaning nod to Lilian which Patty caught. "Yes, you think 'the poor English teacher,' don't you?"

"It reminded me of outlines," Cathalina acknowledged.

"We must have a meeting tomorrow and I will tell you just what I think we can do."

At the morrow's meeting the girls enthusiastically approved Miss West's idea, applauded the productions already in hand and thanked her warmly for taking the responsibility. It was, to be sure, hers as councillor to see that the girls had some sort

of entertainment ready for their turn at stunt night, but these girls, as good campers, were always willing to do their share and had no desire to take advantage of their young councillor. Some of the parts were given out and the girls began to learn them. They considered it pure fun, for there was required no serious preparation.

The canoe trip to Brunswick was next on the list of trips. The canoes, stripped of their decorations, bore the jolly campers away, around Marshmallow Point into Merrymeeting Bay, to the left, past Brick Island of Captain Kidd fame, and on up the Androscoggin river, the war canoe in the lead. So many wanted to go that each of the smaller canoes bore three. Some of the little girls who could not paddle were among those who sat more or less comfortably on life preservers in the middle. Or it would be one of the older girls who took the middle position, to change places with some tired paddler in bow or stern as need might be. The girls were reminded of the rules that no one was to change places in midstream. They must paddle to shore and make the adjustment. Lunch was distributed among the canoes, for the launches could not go up the shallow Androscoggin.

Hilary and Lilian took June with them. Frances, Betty and Cathalina were together. Neither Betty nor Cathalina had as much endurance as Frances,

but they thought that by changing occasionally, all would be able to make the eight or ten-mile paddle with ease. Eloise, Helen and Isabel were together and rather evenly matched in paddling ability, as were Marion, Jean and Nora. Patty, with another councillor, carried some of the heavier packages or cans of lunch in their canoe.

"Hard luck, Miss West," called Isabel; "what you have in the middle of your canoe can't change places and help you paddle."

"Some of it will help me paddle coming back," answered Patty, pointing to the milk can and package of sandwiches. "And Mr. Clark has gone on ahead to see about getting corn for us to roast."

"O, joy!" exclaimed Isabel, "corn and bacon! I saw them putting in the bacon."

"Do we wait till we get to Brunswick before we have lunch?" asked Eloise. "Patty spoke as if we would."

"No, I don't think so," said Isabel. "We build a fire somewhere along the river, I think."

"I don't see the war canoe. I wonder which side of this big island we take."

"I believe the one to the left is the way," and Isabel pointed out a few imaginary indications that the war canoe had taken that course. But it turned out that while their canoe had no trouble in getting through, this channel would have been too shallow

for the war canoe. It had gone to the right. There were many sand bars in the river, but the paddling was easy. There was no wind and the water was calm, like a mirror reflecting the rocks and dark green trees of the shore, while the dark blue canoes came stealing up on the grassy surface to add to the beauty of the scene. Not even the most practical girl, her mind chiefly upon getting to the destination, eating lunch and getting points for paddling, could fail to be impressed by it.

"Shall we go to see Bowdoin College?" inquired Helen.

"In this rig?"

"Excuse the question, Eloise; I forgot our picnic garb. I remember the girls said that they usually go by trolley from Bath."

It must be admitted that a substantial lunch adds much to the joy of such picnics. This one was especially good. The corn was boiled in a big kettle, which was borrowed or hired for the occasion. Such perfect and tender ears they were. Boiling was substituted for roasting and saved much time, a second lot of ears going in the pot as soon as the first came out. Potato salad and pickles, all the sandwiches one could eat, cake, ripe pears and all the milk one could drink,—what more could they ask? Yet still came marshmallows, passed around to be toasted over the embers.

"We'll start home early, girls," announced the young director of athletics. "Then we can take our time, change often if we get tired, and everything will be in our favor, no wind, and tide and current in the right direction. I believe we could almost float home!"

It was not quite like floating, however, and the girls earned their points for paddling. But without trouble they all reached camp in good season, and in good humor to think that they had carried through a twenty-mile paddle.

"How much do you think I paddled, Frances?" asked Cathalina, as they put away their paddles.

"O, you must have paddled half the way, in resting either Betty or me."

"Scarcely that, I'm afraid. You paddled too long several times and wouldn't let me take it, you know. You were afraid I'd get too tired."

"Not at all. Wanted the points."

"Never mind, I know you. You would take stern most of the way, too."

"I wish you were coming to Greycliff next year, Frances," said Betty. "How you would fit in with our crowd. You would love Polly and Juliet, and how proud we'd be of you!"

"That is awfully dear of you, Betty. For 'half a cent' I'd come. But I don't think I can."

"Think about it, anyhow," Betty insisted.

CHAPTER XXIII.

"STUNT NIGHT" WITH SQUIRRELS' INN.

SEVERAL things had conspired to put off the White Mountain and Wiscasset trips, till within about ten days of the close of camp. The first was a three days' jaunt, when the girls were taken first by boat, then by truck, with their packs, to the foot of Mt. Washington, which they were to climb. The second led to historic little Wiscasset, part of the way by boat, the rest a hike, except for the little girls who were taken all the way by launch. The night was spent under the stars near the old block house, meals were carried in the launches, and the return the next day was on the same plan, partly by boat, partly on foot.

Patty despaired of having any practice for the Squirrels' Inn "stunt", but concluded that inasmuch as they were not attempting any formal performance before a critical audience, one or two hasty rehearsals of the program as a whole in the club room would do. Only Frances and Hilary were going to Mt. Washington, but the other girls all went to Wiscasset.

At last the fateful night arrived, stage property was quickly collected, each girl having her own peculiar accoutrement to gather, and Miss Patricia was on hand with the program in full, ready to prompt or to take part with the performers. At the piano was a musical councillor, who was to play the accompaniments, and Eloise, who had been ill when her own klondike had their evening, had been asked to help with the singing. That it was a musical program might be taken for granted by any who knew Miss West's tastes and her chief avocation. But it is not to be supposed that she would undertake any classical performance as a "stunt". The music consisted of the popular airs; the songs were little verses illustrating Merrymeeting activities, all bound together by one central idea.

That announcement of the numbers might be avoided, the girls had prepared small programs written on ordinary yellow tablet paper, cut and folded. The audience upon the floor of the club room read upon the outside:

Squirrels' Inn
Presents
The Merrymeeting Follies
of 19—
Monday Evening, August —

Inside they found the program in order, and tongues were busy as they looked it through.

"O, I wonder what that is. Do you suppose that the doctor will really be in it?"

"Look at this: 'Bird Hike.....Bird, Mother Nature and Chorus'. Birdie, are you going to take part?"

"Of course not," replied the nature lady, settling back in her little rocking chair. "But I lent them my rubber boots and hat."

"I wonder," said Betty behind the curtain, "if they will take it in about the head band."

"Of course they will," said Frances, who was just adjusting hers across her forehead. "The head-band—the connecting link which has a symbol for all the things we do!" This with the explanatory gesture of an orator.

"There will be some funny symbols put up to-night," said Betty, tossing up a volley ball.

"I guess so. Imagine a pickle jar on our head bands! Dear me, I hope I don't forget my songs."

"You haven't had much time to learn them. Have you gotten over the effects of mountain climbing?"

"O, yes; there weren't any, except my tired feet."

"Everybody here and ready?" asked Miss Patricia, looking last to see if Isabel and Virgie, who were to manage the curtains, were in place.

At her signal, they drew aside the curtains, re-

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vealing the eight girls—Frances, Marion, Nora, Hilary, Lilian, Betty, Cathalina and Eloise, who were dressed in full camp costume, including head bands, arm bands, and diamonds on the sweaters, and carried each some emblem of Merrymeeting activities, from volley ball and paddle to the silver cup marked Merrymeeting Trophy.

After a chord from the accompanist, the girls sang to a popular ragtime tune the "Opening Chorus" of the program:

 "Just a head band,
 Golden and Blue;
 Athletic emblems
 Of what we can do—
Swimming, baseball, tennis, paddling, basketball,
Volley, hiking,—at our camp we do them all.

 But these symbols
 Don't represent you;
 There are other things
 That you do,
And if you will watch our little show tonight,
We'll give you a head band that'll be right."

The curtains were drawn together in the midst of the applause which welcomed the first appearance, but in a few moments were again parted and drawn

aside. The audience for a second expected an encore or a new number, then saw the point as June shouted, "O, there's the head band!" For across the stage at a convenient height and pinned upon the wall was an immense dark-blue "head band", upon which had just been placed the customary M C with a small pine tree on each side. The golden symbols, like the program, were cut from yellow tablet paper.

"I get it," said Jo. "They're making a head band with our 'Follies'."

The first activity to be perpetuated in song was the "Marshmallow Roast" of the program. When the curtains were drawn, they disclosed in the foreground a camp fire made of sticks, in the center of which glowed a lighted lantern covered with red paper. Close to this sat the "marshmallow", covered with white and occasionally shaking a white powder from the drapery, by which she was concealed. Frances stood back of her holding the stick on which she was supposed to be impaled. The tune was "Old Black Joe".

"Marshmallow plump,
With sugar powdered o'er;
Marshmallow white,
They wish they had some more;

Marshmallow brown,
 As down their throats I go,—
 I hear Camp Merrymeeting calling
 ‘Marshmallow!’

CHORUS:

Marshmallow, marshmallow,
 I’m used for every roast;
 I hear Camp Merrymeeting calling,
 ‘Toast! Toast! Toast!’ ”

Curtain. Curtains apart again. A fat marshmallow on the head band, next to one of the pine trees.

“This next ought to be funny,” said Dot, who was in the front row. “‘Deep Sea Fishing, (a) Fish Chorus, (b) Fishermen’s Chorus.’ How can they fix up fish?”

“They don’t have to much,” answered June. “We are supposed to use our imagination. Hilary says that they didn’t use to have all the stage fixings that they think they have to now.”

“Sh-sh, here they are!”

Four girls in Merrymeeting costume sat upon the edge of the big table under the head band. With sticks and lines they were fishing. In front of them, facing the audience, but lying upon the floor in swimming position, were four “fish”, just the girls, in customary garb, without any attempt at a fish

costume. To the lively tune of Jingle Bells, and with the movements appropriate to swimming and "flapping" of fins, they sang the following ditty:

"We are fishes gay,
Swimming every day,
In the ocean blue,
Just see what we can do!
We dart and dance about,
Each minnow and each trout;
We glisten and we gleam,
As we sidestroke down stream.

CHORUS:

Flap your fins! Flap your fins,
Fishies in the sea,
Oh what fun to splash and dive
And swim so gay and free!
Flap your fins! Flap your fins,
Fishies in the sea,
O, who would not a fishie be
In the bottom of the sea!"

At this, the fishers started a rollicking chorus with waving lines:

"We're deep-sea fishers,
Watch us fish!
We ride out over the ocean
Where-e're we wish.

We don't have to wait for the fish to bite,
 They jump on the hooks when we heave in sight,—
 We're deep-sea fishers,
 Watch us fish!"

At the appropriate time the fishes turned and caught the lines, then rose as the fishers jumped down from the table, and all danced around in a circle, while the accompanist played the tune through once, finishing it as the last fish or fisher disappeared through the door in the midst of most enthusiastic applause, especially from those who had memories of the deep-sea fishing trip.

The Bird Hike was introduced by a solo from the bird, the burden of whose refrain was:

"Come along, there's a bird hike here today;
 Get you ready, there's a bird hike here today;
 I know them by their graceful walk,
 There's a bird hike here today.
 I'm a poor old fowl, but I'll fool 'em yet," etc.

Hilary was the "bird", and sat on the corner of that most convenient table, when—enter Mother Nature and Girls. "Clementine" was the tune in which the following musical conversation occurred:

GIRLS—

Mother Nature, Mother Nature,
 Shall we see some birds today?

MOTHER NATURE (ELOISE)—

Very likely, very likely,
If only quiet you will stay.

GIRLS—

Mother Nature, Mother Nature,
Here's a rock where we may sit.

MOTHER NATURE—

Yes, sit down and all be quiet,
While we wait for birds to flit.

GIRLS—

Mother Nature, Mother Nature,
What's that bird upon the limb?

MOTHER NATURE—

Steady now, give me the glasses,
While I take a look at him.

Eloise as Mother Nature, in the well known hat pulled down over her face, the scarlet blouse of the nature lady and the rubber boots which had given her the title of Puss in Boots, was hailed with wild applause and shrieks of delight from the audience. The nature lady herself leaned back in her chair to laugh at this clever representation. In a sweet contralto, Eloise sang her comments on the bird while she gazed through the glasses:

“Dear little bird in the bushes,
Under the old pine tree,

Singing alone,
In a sweetly cheerful tone,
Perching in the air(!)
Flying everywhere!
Notice the marks on his wings, girls;
Look at the stripe on his knee;
I'm sure this pretty bird
Will be the rarest thing we've heard
What kind of a bird, girls,
Can that bird be?"

The girls now took up the air, repeating the same song with Eloise, and assuming attitudes of delight when the Bird began to sing. But how their expressions changed as he announced that as only a Plymouth Rock rooster "cock-a-doodle-doo" was all that he could sing, "when I flap my wing, scaring everything". And while he would like to be an "eagle" or a "flycatcher", it was merely as a "scratcher" that he could claim their interest. Curtain.

The "Merrymeeting Moon", which came next, was entirely different from anything which had been given. Lilian, who represented the chief editor, Maribelle Hartley, was prettily dressed in a real party frock, filmy and beautiful, wore silver slippers and carried a round moon." This was a round circle of cardboard, cut out in the center to leave only a

wide rim and covered with silvered paper. Grace and gestures with this moon and a few steps here and there to show the silver slippers accompanied a very pretty song written to one of the more elaborate ragtime tunes.

"Merrymeeting needs your gleaming, just to keep us all a-beaming," sang Lilian, addressing the silver moon which she was holding above her head; and at the close of the song she stood with her face framed within the rim while singing:

"Can't you all tell
That I'm Maribelle,
I'm the Man in the Moon, you see."

The audience was scarcely satisfied with one repetition of this, but time was pressing and the program had to go on. By this time a fish, a bird and a moon had been added to the symbols on the head band.

The girls enjoyed taking off the camp doctor in the next act, called on the program, The Infirmary, Doctor—and Gargling Girls. There had been some mild cases of tonsilitis, immediately isolated in the "Infirmary", where, with skull and cross-bones, the girls had announced the "Leper Colony" on a clever sign, and bewailed their isolation. This was all portrayed in the sketch. First the girls appeared,

wrapped in long bath robes and singing pathetically about the "tonsils' retreat" and the "little cots, whose owners have spots,—

And the doctor's job,
Their throats to swab,
Can't be beat!"

Their temperature was "torrid" and the gargle "horrid". Then came the doctor, who looked at their throats with the aid of an immense kitchen spoon, and sang with great enjoyment a solo to the effect that he had waited long to catch them, but had them fast quarantined now. Giving each a spoonful from a large bottle, he stood before them like an orchestra leader, and beat time with the spoon, while in throaty tones to the tune of John Brown's Body the girls sang, "Gargle, gargle, gargle, gargle," etc., and falling into a procession behind the doctor, filed out. This proved so popular that the "doctor" was forced to repeat his solo and lead again the chorus of gargling girls. Frances, of course, as the tallest of the girls, impersonated the doctor and tried to imitate his step and movements. This time the curtains parted to show a spoon on the head band.

"What do you suppose the next will be?" asked Jean in the audience.

"It says "Pickles", replied Rhoda, "but who knows how they'll do it?"

"Pickles

(a) Onion

(b) Cauliflower

(c) Quartered pickle," read the program.

When Isabel and Virgie drew the curtains, Betty, Cathalina and Nora stood there decked in green crepe paper, Betty's costume having yellow trimmings. At once Betty, to the tune of "Reuben, Reuben" began the song of the pickled onion:

"Picnic pickles you've been eating,

All the pickles you could get,

I should think you'd hate to think of

All the pickles you have 'et',—

H'm-te-dum-tum,

H'm-tum-dum!"

(Turning around quickly)

"Here behold the pickled onion

Round and sweet as I can be,

Where'll you find another onion

Anywhere to equal me?

H'm-te-dum-tum," etc.

Nora now took up the song:

"My name's pickled cauliflower,

I'm as crisp as I can be;

Where'll you find another cauliflower
Anywhere to equal me?" Refr.

Cathalina's inquiry was similar:

"Once I was a full-sized pickle,
But they came and quartered me;
Where'll you find a quartered pickle
Anywhere to equal me?" Refr.

At this point the Picnic Pickles joined hands above their heads and circled the stage singing:

"Three sweet pickles in the barrel,
Picnic pickles can't be beat;
Merrymeeting girls all love us,
Eat and smile and smile and eat!"

"Merrymeeting Music" not unkindly took off several of the girls in camp, among them one of the chief "yell-leaders", and Rhoda, whose really beautiful piano playing the girls had so much enjoyed all through the weeks of camp. Marion represented her and sang; to "Boola, Boola":

"I am Rhoda
I can play
Brahms and Chopin
Any day.

If you listen
I'll start you off
On the Prelude
Of Rachmaninoff."

Lilian, with her guitar, and Eloise with ukelele, sat upon the floor to sing two or three of the camp favorites and represented the "Jazz" of the program.

Musical notes now appeared upon the head band next to the pickle jar, and the audience again consulted their programs. "Whiskaway" was to appear.

Betty was slim and had made a remarkable though simple costume of black, covering her arms with long black stockings and padding out with cotton a muslin mask to imitate the muzzle of a dog. The rest of the face had a comical expression, and the corners of the big square of muslin had been tied into ears. A gentle old dog sometimes wandered into camp from a neighboring farm, although dogs were forbidden, and had been dubbed "Whiskaway" by the girls.

Down on her knees Betty moved about, causing much amusement among the little girls in front by the waving of her paws and the swinging of the doggy nose, which was not very well fastened at

the lower part. At the last Betty assumed a begging attitude, her stocking-covered hands hanging limply over, with such effect that this tableau and chorus had to be repeated:

“When a cold nose gives you a fright,
That’s dear Whiskaway;
When a footstep sounds in the night,
That’s poor Wiskaway!
I love to sleep in the softest bed,—
I don’t care whether it’s the foot or the head.
I don’t mean to scare you,
But only prepare you
For poor, dear Whiskaway!”

The ensemble chorus gave the new Merrymeeting song which had won the prize. In this and the camp yell with which the performance closed the audience could not help joining, and went away to sing these masterpieces of poesy and song for the rest of the week.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THOSE CAMPING DAYS.

"ISN'T this the most exciting week?" queried Isabel.

"It is indeed," replied Cathalina, who was feeling disappointed over tennis results in the August tournament, provoked at herself for one or two bad plays she had made, yet glad for Lilian that she had won the tournament again. The girls had just finished the final baseball game and both teams, with a few spectators, had strolled off to rest under the trees. A cool breeze blew from the water which sparkled and foamed over the rocks.

"Tournaments to be finished, the last points you can possibly get in anything to be made, swimming match tomorrow, boys' minstrel show next day, then the last hike, the big banquet and prizes and everything on Friday, and on Saturday the last senior lodge play! This hectic life of pleasure has spoiled me for school!"

"Nonsense, Isabel. We'll feel all the more like it," said Lilian.

"There *are* those who love to study, I'm told," said Isabel, who was feeling anything but intellectual that morning, "but the only reason that *I* do it is that I'm ashamed to be ignorant!"

"You are certainly frank about it," Eloise remarked with a quizzical smile.

"Then if you don't study," continued Isabel, saucily addressing Eloise, "you can't enjoy the real fun, because of what hangs over your head in the way of cuts, lessons to be made up, letters home from the faculty, and term work to be repeated because of failures."

"To hear you talk, anybody would think that you are one of those who are always on the ragged edge," reproved Betty. "Frances, Isabel is one of the best in her classes at Greycliff."

"Thanks, Betty, for your kind tribute, but I have learned by observation," said Isabel loftily, "and profited by seeing the awful times the idlers have. They have to pay the bill some time, and that's the only reason I work."

"Isabel is just thinking with her tongue about her reasons for work," said Virginia.

"Lots of people do that," acknowledged Isabel, laughing.

"Unfortunately true,"—and Eloise gave Isabel a gentle push till she fell over on the grass by Cathalina, who was lying at full length.

"Don't you wish you knew," continued Eloise, "what they're going to do at the banquet—and how the dining-room will be decorated,—and what the eats will be,—and how the councillors will dress up,—and who will get the prizes?"

"I wouldn't miss the banquet for worlds!" cried Betty. "The girls all say that it is always *wonderful*, and so exciting and thrilling about the prizes. Why, sometimes the girls have the tears just streaming down their cheeks, but root nobly for the one who took the prize away from them!"

"I don't believe that I could do that," said Virginia.

"O, you'd be ashamed not to be glad for the other girl, wouldn't you?"

"It would just depend on who she was and how she took it," said Virgie with decision. "If she were airy and smarty, I wouldn't like it."

"N-no, but anybody'd be ashamed to be that way up here, or a least to show it. There is too much camp spirit among us."

Cathalina slipped her hand into Lilian's and they exchanged an affectionate look, which Hilary did not miss, and she patted Cathalina's shoulder approvingly.

"I'm sorry for the girls that are leaving early," Virgie continued. "Two or three are going tomor-

row. It's a good thing that the games are about over,—we'd have so few on our team."

"What do we do next week, Frances?" asked Helen.

"Chiefly get ready to leave. It will take us all day Monday to pack."

"How could it?"

"I don't mean every minute, but there will be things to fix and hunt up. We can have some good times in between at the club house, and play tennis or anything we want to, you know, but we leave Tuesday afternoon, and by Wednesday hardly anybody will be at camp."

"Doesn't it make you sick to think about it? Maybe I'll never be able to come back here!" Helen's eyes looked misty.

"We mustn't think about it," said Isabel. "Cheer up. Suppose you could never go home and see your folks."

"Listen to the practical Isabel," laughed Lilian. "That's right, Isabel; always look forward to the next nice thing that you're going to do!"

"By the way, girls," said Isabel, "the last *Moon* will be read Sunday, and I promised to see everybody and ask for a contribution. Every one of you can hand in a personal or some little paragraph about something that has happened in your klon-dike. I'm coming around Saturday and if you

haven't written anything I'm going to sit down and wait till you do. No promises go!"

"Might as well do it, girls," said Eloise. "When the energetic Isabel has a duty to perform, it is a case of 'do it *now*'. O, dear, what fun we have had!"

"*Are* having, *going* to have," insisted Isabel. "Don't start any mourning, anybody. We'll probably have enough of waterworks at the end, and I, for one, don't want to begin now."

"You funny, nice, dear old Isabel," said Cathalina, reaching a hand over to rumple Isabel's curly head.

Rapidly passed these last day of camp. The last games of the August tournament were played. Reports of attainment and points earned were handed in by the director of athletics, the swimming instructor and other councillors. Excitement more or less suppressed spread among the girls as they consulted with each other about whom to choose and vote for in regard to the prize cups. From so many bright, helpful and popular girls, who should be chosen as the best camper among the seniors, the intermediates and the juniors? The girls were warned against "campaigning" for their favorites. In this, points did not count, except as indicating an interest in the activities. The best "all-around camper" would not necessarily be the one who was

first in any particular activity. Former years in camp, giving what we might call "cumulative" helpfulness and loyalty, counted also.

The annual "minstrels" at the boys' camp was one of the great events. Gay boat-loads of girls on that happy night went down to Boothbay Camp, gave enthusiastic support and applause to the entertainment furnished by the boys, enjoyed every feature, and joined heartily in the singing of popular or camp songs while the curtains were drawn between "acts." By lantern and flashlight they again filled the boats for the unusual experience of a ride home on the river after dark. A big flashlight served occasionally as search light, but the pilot knew his river even without a moon.

Mysterious indeed were the doings of councillors on the fateful Friday. All girls were forbidden the dining-room after breakfast, except a few who were asked to help bring down the "greenery" from the woods. These had a peep at the unfinished decorations. There was to be a picnic lunch at noon, to leave the dining-room free for the elaborate decorating, and it was even a mystery where the lunch was to be. In the arts and crafts room councillors were working on the last menu cards, which were being painted and lettered, and occasionally a few girls would invent some "necessary" errands, which

would take them through the room into Laugh-a-lot. But furtive glances only increased interest.

"I saw the cap the camp mother was making," said one. "My, it was pretty. There was a little crinkled yellow ruffle on the edge of black crepe paper."

"Then that's the color scheme! I suppose they'll wear caps and aprons,—they did last year."

"Yes, but it's *never* the same, so you can't tell."

When the bell rang for lunch, all who had to go to the club house for information were directed to the pine grove. But before this, many of the girls had noticed the people who were trailing in that direction with utensils and eatables. The big kettle of hot beans and some other supplies were taken in the convenient and familiar wheelbarrow.

On the rocks at the right of the cove the fire was made and long, fat "wienies" were being cooked in a big pan, which was supported on the edge of the fire by two large chunks of wood.

"O, the beautiful, *beautiful* pine-grove!" exclaimed Cathalina, as she took her place behind Hilary in the line, which had been halted by the smiling head councillor some little distance from the fire till the signal should be given that all was ready.

"If I come back next summer, I'm going to bring my paints and everything," she continued. "I've made some sketches, but I want to get the blue of

the blueberries with the dew on them, and some of the sunsets are so gorgeous,—or so delicate. I saw the most peculiar effect one night when we were starting a camp fire on Marshmallow Point for a marshmallow roast. There were heavy brown-gray clouds and just one streak where the sun was trying to shine through, and the queerest color to the water. I thought of the old poem where “the dark Plutonian shadows gather on the evening blast.”

“Look at this little vine with the scarlet berries,” said Hilary, stooping to gather a bit that was trailing along the ground. “Has this been taken in to Mother Nature yet?”

“I think so, and there is another kind on the ground not far from where the fire is. Yesterday I found the oddest little flower growing right out of the rock in the cove. The flower was almost exactly like the common little fall aster, purple of a sort, but the plant was a single stalk and looked like an evergreen, made you think of balsam. I’m going to ask Mother Nature what it is. I picked it.”

“Hurrah, here we go!” said Hilary, weaving the bit of vine in one of her braids as the line started.

A pasteboard plate received the necessary silver, hot beans spooned out of the kettle by one councillor, two or three “wieners” forked out by the presiding masculine genius of the fire, the bread and butter for the sandwiches, mustard if one wanted

it, the good "picnic pickles" and a sanitary cup for either water or milk. Dessert was to come later, delicious watermelons, not brought down the hill, but served nearer the entrance to the pine grove.

Evening came at last. Camp garb was laid aside for the pretty summer dresses appropriate to the occasion. The girls thought that the bell would never ring. The finishing touches seemed to take the councillors forever! But at last the big bell clanged out its invitation, and the girls came hurrying down the hill.

The dining-room looked almost like a bit of the pine grove, for the rafters were covered by the green branches of the whole trees that had been brought to deck the place, and stood around the supporting pillars and at the sides of the room. White pine, balsam and arbor vitæ filled the dinning hall with spicy odor. And if any were shocked at the cutting of these big "Christmas trees", they might have been told that they were carefully selected where thinning was necessary and where the trees would never have reached a perfect maturity when all had grown larger.

"O, isn't it a dream!" exclaimed Lilian, as she found the place card with her name on it at the same table with Cathalina, Hilary, Betty and Eloise. "Look at these darling menu cards!"

"And read it," said Hilary. "They're too funny.

Let's see if we can make out what the different things really are."

"What do you suppose 'Brunswick Special' is?" wondered Cathalina.

"Maybe our pickles," said Eloise. "No, it isn't in the right place,—O, I know, corn!"

"And the 'Young Fried Flappers' are the fried chickens, of course, and Charlotte Young's name."

"Here's 'Piggly Wiggly', now what can that be?"

"Look at the place on the menu; O, that's the jelly, to be sure."

"'Truant's Delight' must be the ice-cream, and Virginia sauce must be something we have over it and called in honor of Virgie!"

Just before the courses were served, the councillors in a long line, with their giddy postage stamp caps and ruffled aprons, sang a brief song beginning, "O, we are the councillors gay, tra-la," and were greeted with the hearty applause of appreciation and given, both collectively and individually, the "rah-rah's" of Merrymeeting. But ah, those plates of fried chicken, mashed potato and hot rolls! And the platters of steaming corn, served because of its popularity. From bouillon to salted almonds and candy, the refreshments seemed to be a success and the councillors saw to it that each girl had all she wanted. The hour was early, even if dinner was a trifle late.

More than one heart beat a little faster when the table which held the three cups and little packages marked with different names was moved to the center. Chairs were moved back and turned to face in the right direction. The head councillors, in a brief speech full of charm and sincerity, spoke of the camp ideals and of what these prizes would represent, then began to call the names and present to each the prize which she had worked for and won. Not all could win distinction. Some girlish hopes were bound to be disappointed, either when expectation was greater than the facts warranted, or when the contest was so close that no one could tell how the vote would turn.

Hilary won the ring; Lilian, Cathalina, Eloise and Isabel, pins. Hilary's record was unblemished by any tardiness or absence. She had identified birds and flowers, taken the hikes, climbed Mt. Washington, and had been so generally helpful and well liked that some of the girls had voted for her to have the senior cup. Lilian had won the tennis tournament, and Cathalina had won second place, having vanquished all her opponents but Lilian. Isabel, in addition to a long list of activities, had won the swimming meet. Eloise, like Lilian, had been especially good with the musical affairs, and had made points in all lines. Both musical notes and a paddle for canoeing were on her headband, with the

usual symbols. Betty had not quite enough points for a pin, but received arm band and diamond.

The suspense was great when it came to awarding the honor cups to the girls who had been considered and voted the best campers. Frances of the seniors, Charlotte Young of the intermediates, a sweet girl, whose election was practically unanimous, and little June Lancaster of the juniors, were announced. June was quite overcome and went forward for her trophy in great trepidation, while Hilary beamed with pride in her little sister. The girls in excited groups gathered to see the prizes of those who had won them, and then gradually left the dining hall, looking back to see the prettily decorated tables and the tired, but happy councillors who were about to consume the rest of the chicken!

The great event was over. Packing and leave-taking were close at hand. A few days more saw the girls on the eve of their final departure. Many times had they floated away from the little dock, but always to return.

The house party planned by Cathalina was really to be carried out. The girls' trunks were to go by train to New York, but Mrs. Van Buskirk and Philip were to meet them with the big car in Bath, whence by easy stages they would travel to the Van Buskirk home. Cathalina, Lilian, Hilary, Betty, Campbell and Philip were the young people of the party

Philip and Campbell would drive the car by turns.

At last all were ready. The boats were waiting. A bright sun had shone out, after a dark morning, to render the last pictures of Merrymeeting things of beauty and a joy forever. As the boats moved off, there was waving of many hands to the few campers left standing upon the dock.

An unexpected hush fell upon the girls in the *Aeolus*, and to Isabel's great surprise she felt a lump in her throat and several tears trickling down her cheeks. Two or three of the girls were openly crying.

"Mercy, girls," said Isabel, "this will never do! Come on and sing! Lilian and Eloise, start something!"

"Camping Days," suggested Eloise, and in a moment, to the old tune of "College Days", the cheerful voices of contented campers, looking forward to their trip and home, mingled with the chugging of the engine and the splashing of waters.

Don't you remember those camping days?—

Peppy girls and their peppy ways,

Swims and hikes to beat the band,

H'm—m'm, and wasn't it grand?

Plenty of things for you to do,

Volley, basketball, tennis, too;

Time went so fast, it couldn't last,—
Back in those camping days!

Don't you remember those camp fire nights,
After the sunset's glowing lights?
Songs we sang and cheers so loud,
H'm—m'm, and the great old crowd
Starts to Brunswick, city of dreams,
Never will get there, so it seems,
Time went so fast, it couldn't last,
Back in those camping days.

When you're home, you'll think of the fun
In days of rain or days of sun,
One point off if you were late,
H'm—m'm, and wasn't it great?
Don't you remember the Sunday *Moon*?
Hope next summer will come real soon!
Time went so fast, it couldn't last,—
Back in those camping days!

THE END.



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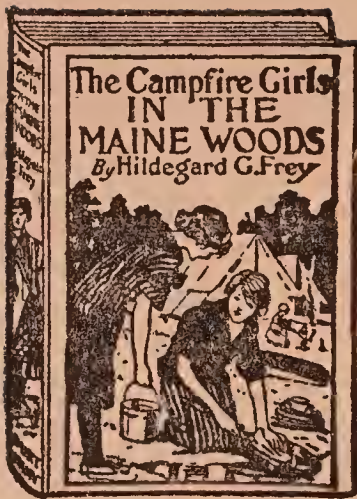
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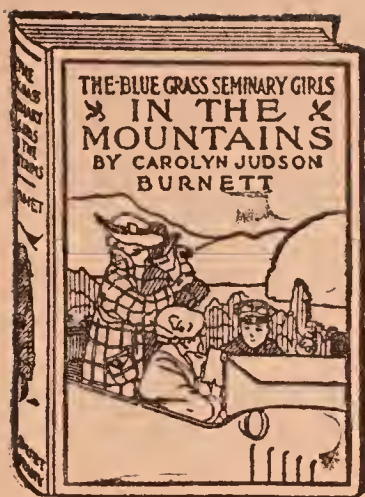
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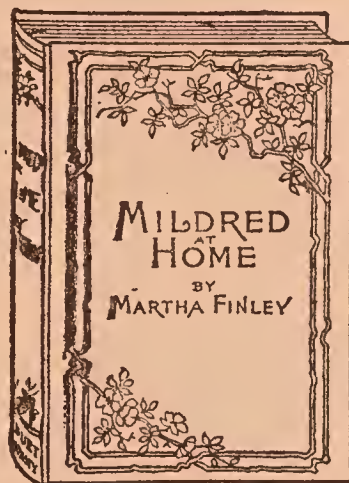
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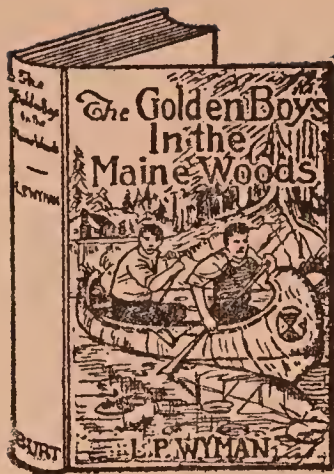
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